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# THE INDEPENDENT

3,045

MONDAY 22 JULY 1996

WEATHER Hot, hazy but breezy

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## Nursery plan drives schools to lower starting age to four



JUDITH JUDD  
Education Editor

The age for starting school will effectively be reduced from five to four, under plans being considered by many local authorities in response to the Government's nursery voucher scheme.

Experts in early years education are alarmed by the proposals because they fear thousands of children who are just four will be put into reception classes which are not equipped to cope with such young children.

From April next year, all

parents of four-year-olds will receive £1,100 in nursery vouchers, to be spent at state or private schools or at playgroups.

Local authorities (throughout the country) are reviewing their admissions policies to ensure that they receive the maximum share of voucher income.

At present, the statutory starting age for school is five, though many authorities admit some pupils before their fifth birthday.

Gillian Pugh, of the National Children's Bureau, said that while many local authorities were considering proposals to admit more four-year-olds, few

were looking at ways of changing the staffing and curriculum of reception classes.

"Everywhere else in Europe children start school at six. Now we are going to start them at four. It isn't the right way to raise standards. You don't tune four-year-olds into learning by treating them like five-year-olds," she said, arguing that there was a difference between nursery education and starting school, which many MPs had failed to grasp.

Nursery classes, for instance, require a ratio of one teacher to thirteen children, but there is no limit on reception class

numbers. Experts also point out that it is counter-productive to introduce children to formal lessons too soon.

Local authorities are considering a variety of schemes for admitting children earlier than they do at present. Hereford and Worcester, which currently admits children in the term before they are five, is consulting schools about changing its policy. A spokesman said the general feeling was that children born in the summer should start when they were just four, two terms earlier than at present, and those born in the spring would start at September

rather than Christmas, one term earlier than at present.

Bedfordshire will consult next term on ways of increasing the proportion of four-year-olds, though final decisions will be left to individual schools. Keith Fossey, the council's education manager, said: "We have to be sure we get back the voucher money for the four-year-olds already in school and to see if we can get our hands on some of the new money. We have a lot of independent nurseries and we may lose children to them."

He said the council aimed to establish standards to ensure that proper provision was made

for four-year-olds, but it would take time to implement them.

Oxfordshire is also consulting about the possibility of admitting a higher proportion of four-year-olds to school, but it is anxious not to do so at the expense of nursery education.

A spokesman said: "We want to frame the policy in such a way that we say to parents that where nursery education is available we recommend that they put their children into nursery." Just over a quarter of the county's three and four-year-olds are in nursery education.

Hampshire, which already

admits children to school on a part-time basis when they are four is exploring the idea of four-year-olds starting full-time school earlier.

Mrs Pugh said: "What really worries me is that, even if vouchers are overturned by a Labour government, the rot has set in. Once you have taken children in early, you are going to carry on doing so."

National tests for five-year-olds are likely to be introduced in primary schools next year, after Government consultation with parents, governors and local authority leaders, it was confirmed yesterday.

## Tory reshuffle stirs up row over Europe

Senior Cabinet members rally round the Chancellor over single currency policy

COLIN BROWN  
Chief Political Correspondent

As John Major prepared to carry out his ministerial summer reshuffle today, there was strong speculation at Westminster that more ministers were ready to resign over his refusal to rule out a single European currency.

The threatened resignation of David Heathcoat-Amory, in spite of intense pressure for the Treasury minister to remain in the Government, ripped the lid off a simmering row among the Prime Minister's most senior ministers over the party's election manifesto policy on Europe.

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, has been joined by Michael Heseltine, the deputy Prime Minister, and Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, in the battle to prevent the Tories going into the election promising to rule out a single currency for the lifetime of the next Parliament.

They are insisting that the party should fight on the Government's White Paper policy of a promise of a referendum if a Cabinet recommends joining a single currency. Mr Clarke's pro-European supporters said Mr Rifkind and Mr Heseltine were supporting the Chancellor to ensure that he is not isolated by Euro-sceptic colleagues.

The split in the Cabinet has led to some ministers warning privately that, with less than a year to go, they are ready to quit. Party whips have been engaged in a heavy damage limitation operation to avoid more ministers leaving the Government. The reshuffle of the lower ranks expected today will do nothing to end the bitterness within the Government over Europe, and could leave some ministers, such as David Davis at the Foreign Office, disappointed with the failure to get higher office.

Euro-sceptic Tory MPs said Eric Forth, the Thatcherite employment and education minister, and David Maclean, Michael Howard's loyal deputy

at the Home Office, are among the disgruntled ministers. "The bitterness in the tea room has to be seen to be believed," said one ministerial aide. "Major has got to sort this out with Clarke, or force him to go."

The reshuffle will see some ministers who feel jaded after years in office stepping down to make way for younger blood. Those going are expected to include John Birt, from the Department of Health, Tim Eggar, the energy minister, and Steve

### Mandarin is called to account

The Treasury official responsible for the internal report predicting privatisation of the welfare state under a future Tory government is expected to be disciplined today by civil service bosses, writes Colin Brown.

Last night the Treasury was said to be furious with Helen Goodman, the civil servant who led the team which was dismissed as "kidds" by the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, after its report was leaked to the press.

Ms Goodman is expected to be challenged over her denial that she is a political activist, after it emerged at the weekend that she hopes to become a Labour MP and is on the shortlist of candidates for the safe Labour seat of South Yorkshire.

However, a spokesman for the Cabinet Office said last night that she had broken no civil service rules. As she has not gained the seat, she has not contravened the rule banning civil servants, under the Servants of the Crown Act, from being candidates for national or European parliamentary elections.

Ms Goodman, 37, whose husband publishes the left-of-centre Prospect magazine, called in the report for the privatisation of pensions and welfare benefits and for roads to be sold off with drivers paying to use them.

Norris, the transport minister, have announced their intention to step down. But Patrick Mayhew, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, who has told friends he is exhausted, may have to continue until the election unless Mr Major changes his mind in favour of dramatic changes to his pack.

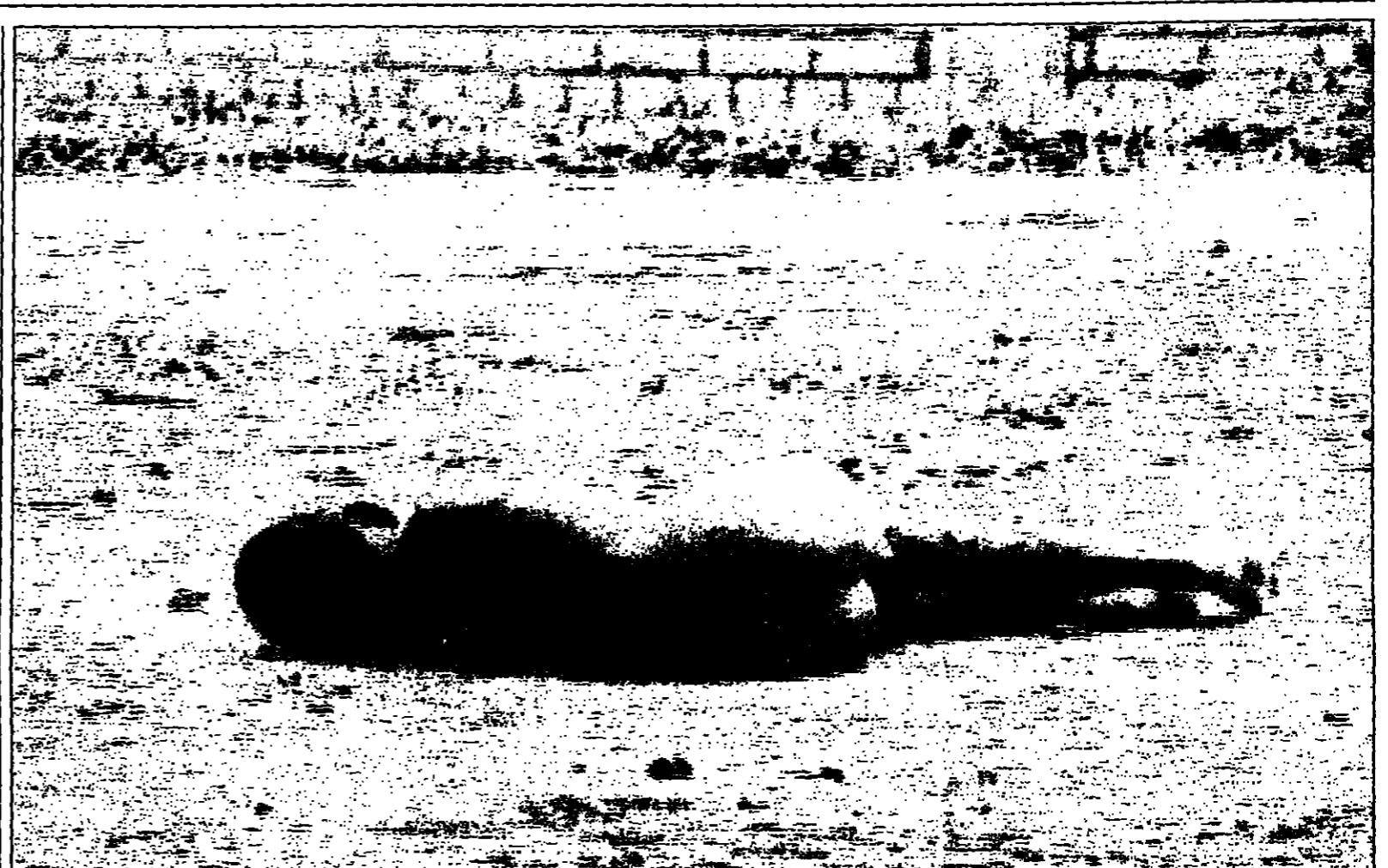
Mr Heathcoat-Amory, the Paymaster General at the Treasury, was refusing to comment over weekend speculation that he will quit to campaign against a single currency. Bill Cash, the leading Tory Euro-sceptic, said: "My argument is for a single currency to be put on the agenda for the inter-governmental conference to put Helmut Kohl [the German Chancellor] Kohl and Tony Blair [the Labour leader] on the spot. It would be a winning stroke. If David Heathcoat-Amory were to resign, that would be very effective in putting pressure on the Prime Minister."

Terry Dicks, another Euro-sceptic Tory MP, warned Mr Major against "pussy-footing around".

Part of the Tory panic over Europe was caused by rumours that Mr Blair was about to declare a commitment ruling out a single currency for the lifetime of the next Parliament. Authoritative Shadow Cabinet sources yesterday denied any such commitment by Labour.

But Mr Blair, who is fighting attempts by the left wing to unseat Harriet Harman in the Shadow Cabinet elections on Wednesday, is facing a challenge from more than 50 Euro-sceptic Labour MPs. They are publishing a pamphlet tomorrow calling for Mr Blair to rule out the single currency.

The "People's Europe" group is calling on activists to challenge their Labour MPs over their position on Europe. The group warn that joining a single currency would lead to a Labour Government axing £18m from public spending schemes, including hospitals and schools. They warn Mr Blair that it could split a Labour Cabinet in the same way that it has divided the Conservatives.



Senseless slaughter: The body of a dead child at Bugendana, where more Hutu raiders killed more than 300 Tutsis

Photograph: Reuters

## The horror returns to Burundi

DAVID ORR  
Bugendana

Exclusive: David Orr was the only European reporter to witness the aftermath of a massacre that left 300 dead

A charred claw protruded from the limp bundle where the woman's hand should have been. Two men had wrapped her body in a piece of reed matting and were half dragging it out of the red brick hut where she had fallen.

Smoke was still rising from the smouldering embers of the building and dark patches of congealed blood lay everywhere on the ground. On the concrete floor of the looted health centre, where the remains of more burned bodies lay in ashes, the pools of blood were still sticky and red.

Dead cattle, broken pots and blood-soaked clothes were scattered along the paths. Among the debris were piles of bullet casings and under a tree, three blood-covered canteens.

Inside the door of a mud walled cabin another body was concealed, this one burned beyond recognition, its face frozen. The papers discarded on the ground outside gave the only

indication as to who the victim was. An identity card showed the smiling young face of a woman in a dress. Typed below her picture was: Spes-Caritas Ndayikengurukye, born 1971.

"That is the body of my daughter-in-law," said Antoine Rumukera, an old man who stood barefoot and crying a short distance away. "My three grandchildren were also butchered."

This horrific set of killings is a reminder that the international community continues to stand by, even as it stood by during the Rwandan genocide. The UN has constantly talked of bringing a peace-keeping force to Burundi. But it has failed to match words with action. In the absence of an international force came this mass murder.

The true horror of Saturday morning's attack on Bugendana, in central Burundi, was revealed in a clearing at the end of a dirt track. There, on a piece

of open ground, were laid out the bodies of about 300 people, mostly women and children. The corpses, wrapped in blankets and reed matting, had been placed side by side in three long rows.

Many had open gashes on their heads and limbs, others were badly burned. The feet which protruded from the makeshift shrouds were in many cases those of small children, no more than a few inches long.

Witnesses say the attack on Bugendana was launched as dawn broke over the lush, rolling hills which surround the community. This was a settlement of about 1,800 members of the country's minority Tutsi group. They were living in the centre's municipal buildings, after being displaced from their homes in the fighting which followed a coup attempt by Tutsi troops in 1993.

Tutsi soldiers now guarding Bugendana say the list of dead

stands at 320 people, though this number could still rise. Some 160 wounded lie in nearby hospitals while about 30 inhabitants are reported as missing.

"We were asleep in our beds when we heard shooting," said Pascasie Ngendabanyika, one of more than 50 wounded who are now recovering in hospital in the provincial capital, Gitega.

"It was time for the first radio programme to come on the air. I was breast-feeding my child when men came into our house and started shooting. A bullet hit my baby in the back and went through one of my arms. The attackers asked for money. I gave them some clothes and told them I had no money. Then they said, 'kill her' and I ran away. They fired again and hit me in the other arm. I sneared my face with blood and lay down amongst some dead people outside. That is how I survived."

Other witnesses of the dawn

raid on Bugendana say the attackers numbered more than 1,000. They say they were rebels from the Hutu majority who have been locked in a bitter and increasingly brutal conflict with the largely Tutsi army.

"When we heard the shooting we thought they were attacking the military post," said one stunned inhabitant. "But then the rebels came to our houses and started shooting. I recognised some of the attackers, they were Hutus, our neighbours from the hills. We knew many of these people."

The attackers appear to be Hutu peasants. According to many witnesses, the killers were led by Rwandan Hutus who were apparently members of the former Rwandan army. They carried automatic weapons which they used to mow down those trying to flee.

Relatives of the dead recall that groups of men and women danced and sang as the houses were torched and petrol poured over their terrified occupants. Dozens of people appear to have been burned alive.

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### What got our athletes to the Olympics?

## Talent, determination and a McDonnell-Douglas MD11

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# Tories hit by fresh sleaze row

COLIN BROWN and  
CHRIS BLACKHURST

Disclosures last night that a businessman involved in £100,000 supper club raising funds for the Tory party is also linked to a bid for Ministry of Defence estates last night plunged the Government into a renewed row about sleaze and party political funding.

The Prime Minister faced Opposition demands to drop the consortium involving John Beckwith from the bids for the 57,000 MoD married quarters, after it was disclosed he had set up the fund-raising club for the Conservative Party.

The Premier Club seeks donations of £10,000 from businessmen, with the promise of providing "opportunities for the positive exchange of views" at dinners with ministers. But for £100,000 "as a founder

member, you will be on the list of smaller dinners with the Prime Minister".

A Tory spokesman confirmed last night that Mr Beckwith was behind the club, but denied there were special favours for paying more. "He set the whole thing up. You do pay these sums, but one sum doesn't guarantee the Prime Minister and another doesn't say you won't see the Prime Minister."

The Central Office spokesman also denied a report in the *Observer* (although it was backed by a transcript of a taped interview with one of the club's organisers) that donors were advised how to dodge company law on the disclosure of political donations. They were told that it could be written off as "entertainment".

However, those claims inflamed the row. Robin Cook, the shadow Foreign Secretary,



Peter Beckwith (left) and his brother John

said: "This is the most blatant example of corruption in the history of even this sleazy Government. Businessmen may now be able to buy access and influence by slipping the Tory party a secret bung."

Mr Cook said he was writing



to the Prime Minister, calling for Mr Beckwith's consortium to be removed from the list of bidders for the MoD homes. David Clark, the shadow Defence Secretary, said: "This man should not be allowed to bid for public assets."

John Beckwith is the younger of the Beckwith brothers, who made their fortune from the Eighties property boom with their stock market-quoted company, London and Edinburgh Trust.

Like his brother, Peter, he was educated at Harrow School and Cambridge University. Peter trained as a solicitor, John as an accountant, before moving into big time property. LET enjoyed one of the highest profiles of any property group, cropping up on some of the biggest deals, including the Spitalfields Market redevelopment in the City of London.

The brothers both live in south-west London - John is a major benefactor of Harlequins Rugby Football Club - which, ironically is where they hit controversy with their plans for the Richmond Ice Rink, one of the area's best known landmarks.

The deal struck between Richmond Council and the Beckwiths was that they could pull down the building, which was badly in need of repair, and use the plum site right by the Thames for their own development - provided they built a rink elsewhere in the borough.

A clause in the contract said the new rink did not need to be built if property conditions went against the brothers. In the event, that is what happened. So, to the fury of many locals, the much-loved old rink has gone and a new one has never materialised. Meanwhile, the site of the old rink has been sold and used for luxury housing.

The Liberal Democrat leader, Paddy Ashdown, has written to Mr Major about the Observer's "deeply disturbing" report, demanding a Commons statement.

## School ready for grieving pupils

MATTHEW BRACE

Friends of Caroline Dickinson, the 13-year-old girl from Launceston, Cornwall, who was raped and murdered in a hostel on a school trip to Brittany, go back to school today for guidance and comfort from counsellors, amid calls for tighter security on such trips.

The Schools Psychological Service in Launceston has mobilised half a dozen counsellors who will be on duty at Caroline's school, Launceston College. Auxiliary members will be standing by.

Mike Nicholls, county councillor for Launceston and chairman of the county's social services committee, said the programme of comfort and support could take six months.

"It depends on who needs counselling. It's not just the children and staff on the trip but all those involved with the school who are affected," he said.

He stressed the counselling was not compulsory.

"We haven't been telling people to come in. Some may feel it better to talk to friends, a parish priest or their doctor."

Some might be too emotionally exhausted to make it to school today. The children were reunited with their parents late on Saturday night. They were too shattered to join a service



A friend of the murder victim Caroline Dickinson after a memorial service in Launceston yesterday. Photograph: Apex

held in St Mary Magdalene's church in Launceston yesterday morning where the Rev Tim Newcombe spoke of the "fathomless grief" of Caroline's family.

Flags have flown at half mast in the Cornish town since the news broke and floral tributes have been left at the school's gates.

North Cornwall's MP, Paul

Tyler, offered sympathy and added that he will be seeking to meet foreign office ministers "at the earliest opportunity" to find out more about security in the hostel in the Breton village of Pleine-Fougerees where Caroline was raped and suffocated in the early hours of Thursday morning.

Police believe a man walked in through doors which were

kept unlocked as a legal fire requirement.

Mr Tyler said: "A similar hostel in this country would have had fire doors that could only be opened from the inside."

"It may be that the adults [in charge of the children] were given the impression that similar types of security were in place at this hostel. If they had that

expectation that it would be secure, maybe they were lulled into a false sense of security."

Police in France are no closer to catching Caroline's killer. They believe the man was an outsider who walked in through the unlocked hostel doors. It is unclear whether a photo-fit image of a bearded man being shown to locals is that of a suspect.

## Two die as last Mosquito crashes

JAMES CUSICK

The world's last airworthy Mosquito fighter bomber crashed at an airshow yesterday killing its pilot and navigator.

Michael Edwards, secretary of the Lancashire Aero Club, which was sponsoring the air show, said the De Havilland Mosquito, owned by British Aerospace, was the last flying example of its type.

The operations manager of Greater Manchester Ambulance, Clive Heather, who was at Barton Aerodrome to provide on-site medical assistance, said: "The plane was going through a well-rehearsed routine. Then it climbed higher and higher towards the edge of the airfield before it spiralled." Mr Heather said it became obvious that the aircraft was not going to complete the manoeuvre. The noise of the crash was heard around the airshow.

Two paramedic units and an emergency fire service unit were first at the scene of the crash which occurred in dense woodland running parallel to the M62. Debris was strewn across a field and nearby woodland. Paramedic crews fought through the fire to reach the cockpit. They found the two bodies and had them flown by RAF helicopter to Hope Hospital in Manchester.

Michael Edwards, Lancashire Aero Club chairman, said the tragedy had cast a shadow over what had been a happy family event. John Hadfield, flight safety officer at British Aerospace, who owned the plane said that both crew were dedicated and highly experienced aviators.

The pilot, a professional, with many years of flying experience, had flown the plane many times and the second man was also believed to be an engineer in charge of looking after it on the ground.

Mr Hadfield said the crash had destroyed an important piece of aviation history.

"It is the loss of a unique aircraft," he said. The wooden De Havilland Mosquito was well-known for its speed and had provided an invaluable service during the Second World War on photo-reconnaissance missions and as a leader plane for squadrons of Lancashire and Halifax bombers.

The wreckage will be recovered and examined by CAA investigators in an attempt to discover what could have caused its final fatal descent.

The identities of the pilot and navigator are being withheld until relatives are informed.

## SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

A leaked report shows asylum-seekers may be given European-wide rights, including arrangements to guarantee schooling for their children. The inter-governmental report, whose authors include Britain, will fuel the controversy today over a move in the Lords by Lady Williams, the SDP founder, and Opposition peers to restore a three-day period of "grace" in the Asylum Bill for people seeking political asylum.

The vote in the Lords could be close. If the Government is defeated, ministers could face a clash between the Lords and the Commons, which has rejected the amendment. Critics of the Government warned ministers they would be bringing the House into disrepute if they seek to avoid defeat by whipping Tory backwoodsmen to save them. Colin Brown

Drug sold at a rave party could be contaminated with "something particularly harmful" and could be highly dangerous, police warned last night. Thousands of people from all over Britain attended the rave at The Sanctuary in Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, at the weekend and detection officers have warned anyone who bought amphetamines at the party to seek medical help if they felt any side effects. Already two partygoers are in hospital in Milton Keynes after taking the drugs and police have arrested a total of 17 people. Police raided the rave during a planned inquiry and more than 30 officers searched some of the revellers. Detective Chief Inspector John McIntyre said the aim had been to target drug dealers who travel the country selling their wares.

The former star of *Riverdance* may never dance again after collapsing on stage during a preview of his new show, Michael Flatley (right) will know the extent of his injuries at today but it is feared his career could be over after he tore a leg muscle at the Manchester Apollo on Friday night. If his injuries are serious, he will fail to appear on the first night of his new show, *Lord of the Dance*, which opens tomorrow at the Coliseum in London. An end to his dancing might mean a record insurance payout as he insured his legs two months ago for £25m. Matthew Brace



A Bill to end restrictions on flying the Union Flag is to be introduced in the Commons. Its sponsor, the Tory MP Michael Fabricant, warned that unless action was taken then the British flag could end up as an exhibit in a history museum. He said: "It is time for us to show how proud we are of our own country. In the past, the Union Flag has been hijacked by extreme right-wing groups like the National Front. We should now make the Union Flag more available to everyone to fly in their gardens and at their place of work."

"At the moment, you have to get planning permission before you can even erect a flagpole. Government buildings are allowed to fly the flag only on 20 days a year, and those have to be special days. We should allow them to fly it whenever they want, namely 365 days a year." The Union Flag Bill will come before the Commons next Wednesday.

A row over the use of a Belgian helicopter to rescue a cyclist who fell off a cliff at Dover will leave the Secretary of State for Defence, Michael Portillo, facing Commons questions. Labour has described the incident as "demeaning" and the result of the Government's reorganisation of air-sea rescue services. As it happened, the injured cyclist was rescued by a local Kent air ambulance crew of volunteers, but only minutes before the helicopter from Ostend would have arrived at the scene.

David Clark, Labour's defence spokesman, said: "We were only minutes away from the first British casualty on our shores being rescued by a foreign agency. This is an outrageous situation. A Department of Transport spokesman said there had been a review of search-and-rescue provision and a response was being considered."

A coach plunged down an embankment, overturned in a field and left 14 people needing treatment in hospital yesterday, three of them with serious injuries. One passenger lost an arm in the crash at Balloch on Loch Lomondside. A number of people on the single-decker coach managed to scramble free through a hatch on the vehicle's roof. Five passengers were pulled to safety by firefighters. Police said the accident happened as the coach drove south along the A52 road with 51 passengers, most of them holidaymakers from Northern Ireland. Chief Superintendent Kenneth McInnes, of Strathclyde police, said the driver of the coach, who was not seriously injured, had taken a breath test, which was negative. James Cusick

Seven people will share the £9.9 million National Lottery jackpot, the organiser Camelot said. Each ticket-holder will receive £1,426,747 after picking the correct six numbers: 14, 44, 6, 25, 34 and 20. A further 19 will receive £161,736 each after matching five balls plus the bonus number, 45.

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## 'Is this a baseball bat which I see before me?'

MATTHEW BRACE

"Ring the alarm bell. Murder and treason!" Macbeth is a junkie.

In the latest production of the Shakespearean tragedy, being made by the BBC, the murderous Scottish general is a drug addict on a run-down inner city council estate.

Macbeth is no stranger to adaptation - in the past he has been played in many guises including a fascist dictator - but this latest version will rekindle the debate over modernising the Bard's works.

For her backdrop, the filmmaker Penny Woolcock has returned to the Ladywood estate in Birmingham where she filmed an award-winning documentary, *Shakespeare on the Estate*, following director Michael Bogdanov as he rehearsed local residents for open

air performances of Shakespeare snippets. This time professional actors have stolen the leading roles demoting residents to mere spear carriers, page boys and other walk-on roles.

Duncan, the noble King of Scotland in the play, takes on a considerably more corrupt reincarnation as an evil crime baron immersed in a world of drugs and violence and with a stranglehold on the estate. Woolcock herself will play the role.

Macbeth is a Temazepam-addicted estate lou who turns against him on the urgings of his wife.

Woolcock has cast aside the swords favoured by the Royal Shakespeare Company, replacing them with baseball bats, the weapons of the Nineties.

It is unclear whether "Is this a baseball bat which I see be-

fore me?" will be slipped into the script.

The play's three witches magic themselves into street urchins. Woolcock said the scenario was frighteningly similar to life on the estate.

"Nobody has a job. Since it is impossible for anyone to survive on the dole, money is made illegally," she said.

"The local economy, crime and punishment are all controlled by the hard guys."

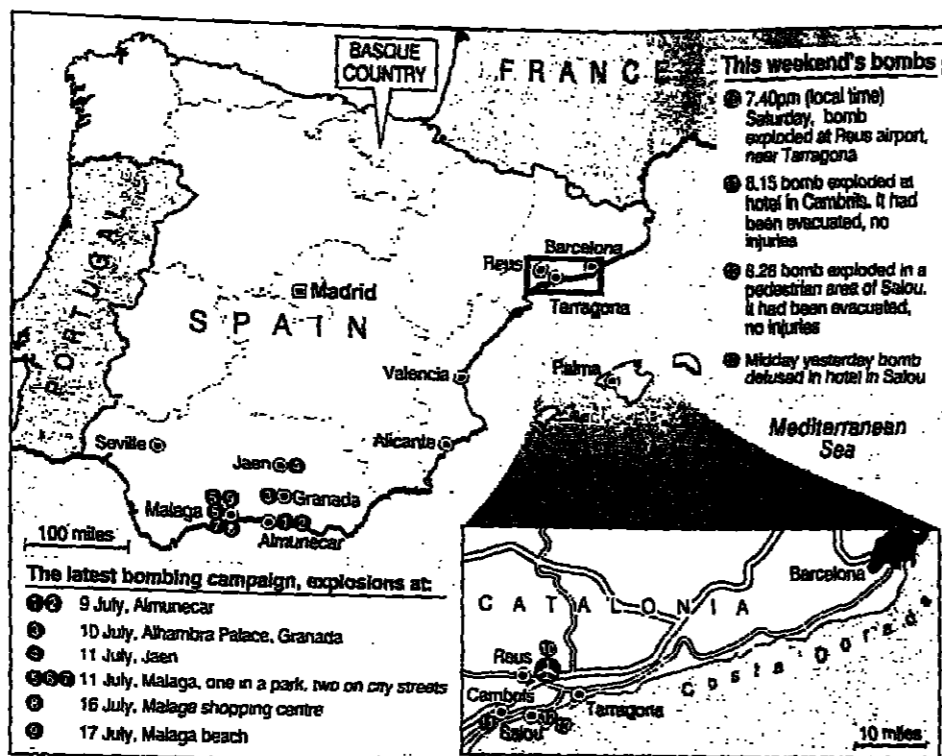
"It all reminded me of Macbeth, where feudal warlords slug it out for territory and power."

Filming for the 90-minute television production is due to start next month on the estate's streets, just 20 miles from Shakespeare's birthplace in Stratford-upon-Avon. The finished article will be aired as part of BBC2's Performance series this autumn.

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# "SHIFT UP A GEAR"

# Terror campaign shifts to Spanish resort



After Saturday's explosion, the discovery of a hotel bomb may test holidaymakers' nerve

JANE WALKER  
Madrid  
CLARE GARNER  
London

A bomb was discovered in a Spanish holiday hotel yesterday afternoon, as survivors of Saturday night's explosion at Reus airport were still recovering in hospital. The discovery brings to four the number of bombs planted in 24 hours by the Basque separatist group Eta.

Only hours after the blast which caused 34 injuries – 21 of them British – Spanish bomb disposal experts defused a device hidden in a ground floor cloakroom of the three-star Delfin Park Hotel in Salou.

Spanish hotel owners and tour operators admitted they were seriously worried about the repercussions of the latest bombing campaign on the tourist trade. But back in Britain, tour operators were playing down the potential impact of the bombs and even tourists caught up in Saturday night's drama were vowing they would be back before long.

"People realise that this can happen just as easily on the streets of London as it can in Spain, Turkey and Egypt," said Russell Amerasekera, commu-

nications director for Thomson holidays, the tour operator through which the injured tourists had booked.

Yesterday, a Lancashire couple described how they missed the airport bomb by a matter of minutes. Safely back at their home in the tiny village of Billington, near Clitheroe.

Mill worker Eileen Parker, 52, said: "I feel awful and can't believe I'm still alive. You always think it will be someone else until you get caught up in it. I was in Manchester just the day before the bomb went off. They say lightning never strikes twice, but for some people it can."

But despite their ordeal, Mrs Parker and her husband, Alan, 58, who works in a foundry, said: "We've been before and we'll go again. There's no way they are going to stop us visiting a place we love."

Richard Grummitt, of Thomas Cook, reinforced the image of the "stiff upper lip" Brit. "Based on previous experience, most people say: 'I've booked my holiday and I'm going.' The British are pretty resilient. They seem quite determined to have their one or two weeks' holiday. The only big issue we've had was people want-

ing to cancel during the British Airways dispute. People thought they wouldn't be able to go on holiday and wanted to make alternative arrangements."

Keith Betton, head of corporate affairs at the Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA), said Britons had a habit of turning a blind eye to trouble spots. "Take the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in Turkey. They have been threatening terrorism for the last four years. It affected the German market, but the number of British visitors to Turkey has doubled. We've had Egypt, where the Islamic fundamentalists have fired shots at boats going up and down the Nile. That had a lot more impact."

But he doesn't believe British holiday makers will become "fanatical" about the situation in Spain. "Four and a half million British people go to Spain this summer. Putting it crudely, even if four people had got shot dead it's one in a million. Eta attempts to make a lot of noise, a lot of smoke and a few headlines in the papers the next day. We hope that that's the kind of tactic they keep to, rather than aiming to hurt people."



Shattered: A police officer examines the damage at Reus airport after the blast on Saturday, which injured 33

Photograph: AFP

## Stubborn separatists keep fire burning

Saturday's attack shows that Eta – Basque Homeland and Freedom – remains both intransigent and all but immune to counter-terrorist efforts by Madrid. Only weeks ago, the Spanish government said it was aware that Eta command structures remained intact.

Eta has planted a number of bombs against tourist targets in recent weeks, creating chaos and uncertainty in Spain's most important industry.

It is a diversion from its usual strategy. During 30 years of terrorism, Eta has usually gone for military or political targets: blowing up Civil Guard barracks, shooting or car-bombing politicians or military men linked to Basque security.

Even after Franco died in

1975, and the new democracy granted Basques the most generous degree of autonomy in Spain – indeed in Europe – Eta did not let up. It regarded Madrid's concessions as empty substitutes for full independence.

Only in 1987 did Eta aim at a "civilian" target. It bombed a supermarket in Barcelona, killing 21 and wounding 35. That attack bloody interrupted attempts by the Socialist government to open up channels of dialogue with Eta.

The government's policy of *rapprochement* followed years of a "dirty war" during the early 1980s, when policemen and civil guardsmen were accused of murdering more than 20 Eta suspects. A clutch of former So-

Driven by dogma, Eta shows few signs of ending its violence, writes Elizabeth Nash

cialist ministers are currently up before the Supreme Court, accused of masterminding these undercover hit-squads, and the scandal helped bring down Felipe Gonzalez's government in the March elections.

Jose Maria Aznar's conservative Popular Party came to power on a hardline anti-Eta platform. Mr Aznar narrowly escaped death in April last year when a huge Eta bomb blew his armoured car to smithereens. He walked calmly from the

wreckage, unhurt. His coolness caused his popularity to soar, and within the year he was Prime Minister.

Eta followed that coup with a foiled plot to kill King Juan Carlos, a car-bomb that killed six in a working-class Madrid suburb and, during the election campaign, two important political assassinations. The second of these, that of the influential jurist, Francisco Tomas y Valiente, in his study at Madrid University, unleashed an outpouring of popular revulsion.

When Mr Aznar took power, his deeds were more conciliatory than his earlier words, in deference to conservative Basque nationalists whose support he needed. He appointed a respected Basque PP leader,

Jaime Mayor Oreja, interior minister, who organised the return of some of the 500-plus Eta prisoners dispersed throughout Spain to jails nearer their homes. This was long an Eta demand, given out by their kidnapping of a prison officer Jose Ortega Lara in January.

Last month Eta announced a week-long ceasefire, prompting Madrid for the first time in years to talk of opening indirect contacts. But Eta spurned the olive branch, so the government slammed the door. Its operating ability seems unimpaired, resistant to both blandishments and repression. The violence that has claimed more than 800 lives may be expected to go on, and Spain is braced for the next atrocity.

## 'Diplomatic' advice on travel

CLARE GARNER

If you think Spain is a dangerous place for a holiday, take a look at the Foreign Office's guide to travelling the world. There is Papua New Guinea, for example, with its "constant threat of danger" or the "currently calm" Casamance region of Southern Senegal where "the situation could however change at any time".

You might consider avoiding internal flights in Russia more of a priority ("It's not known whether aircraft maintenance practices are always properly observed") and attempt "desert travel" in Sudan only if you are "fully equipped and experi-

enced". The Foreign Office updated its Spanish travel advice to the 10 million Britons due to visit the country this year. The amended version refers to the bomb, but otherwise the advice remains unchanged. Tourists are reminded that the "stated aim" of Eta is to disrupt the tourist industry and told to "report any suspicious bags or packets to the local police".

The Foreign Office travel advice – which warns of potential hazards ranging from political insurgency and diphtheria epidemics to pickpockets – is available on Ceefax and in travel agents. Tour operators take their cue from the Foreign Office and describe the informa-

tion as "crucial" since it is "independent".

The travel advice unit of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office advises Britons they "should not attempt to visit" the following countries: Afghanistan, Algeria, Burundi, Iraq, Jammu and Kashmir (India), Liberia, Montserrat, Somalia and Western Sahara. Other countries to be avoided "unless on essential business" are Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Central African Republic, Congo, Rwanda and Tajikistan.

The situation in Spain is not yet severe enough to be in the "Be Vigilant" bracket. "Such advice is reserved for visitors to

places like Georgia, where you must "be vigilant and take sensible precautions against mugging" and Kashmir, where you are told to be "vigilant" and wary of explosions. A Foreign Office spokesman explained: "People should report suspicious packages and be aware of the background to the recent terrorist attacks."

Sometimes, however, the language can sound a bit understated. "They might say 'non-essential trips should be reconsidered' which is Foreign Office speak for don't go there," said Keith Betton, head of corporate affairs at the Association of British Tourist Travel Agents. "They have to be diplomatic."

## American 'tigers' fire first shot in credit-card war

JOHN WILCOCK

Four American credit card companies, dubbed the "Four Tigers" have launched an all-out assault on the UK card market, currently dominated by the likes of Barclaycard and Access, by charging initial interest rates of less than 9 per cent.

American credit card specialist MBNA has been mailing selected potential customers with an offer of 8.9 per cent interest for the first six months, with a switch to their standard rate of 18.9 per cent after that.

Even MBNA's standard rate, however, is significantly below the 22.3 per cent charged by Barclaycard. More damagingly for the British high-street banks, the Americans do not charge an annual fee. For instance, Barclaycard charges £10 a year, and NatWest's Mastercard £12.

This, while the UK base rate has fallen to just 5.75 per cent, with inflation at 2.1 per cent. Politicians and consumer groups have frequently criticised the banks for failing to cut credit-card rates in line with falling base rates.

The Monopolies and Mergers Commission investigated whether the four UK high-street banks were operating a credit-card cartel in the late 1980s. For the previous 20 years Barclays had issued Visa cards, with the other three issuing Access.

Card	Interest % (APR)	Annual fee
MBNA	8.9 (first six months)	
RBS Advanta	15.6	
Barclaycard	22.3	£10
NatWest	22.3	£12

The commission's probe withered away when two new issuers, Chase Manhattan and Save & Prosper, issued cards. But the market is still a hot political potato.

However, don't even think about applying for an American card. The tigers operate on an invitation-only basis. They write to people they consider to be good credit risks.

The US companies prefer to keep a low profile, in contrast to Barclaycard's colourful TV advertising campaign starring the comedian Rowan Atkinson.

The Four Tigers have taken large swathes of customers from American high-street banks like Citicorp by concentrating on people with good credit ratings, and offering rock-bottom interest rates. And now the US market is saturated with low-rate credit cards, the tigers are

turning their sights on the UK market, which they regard as "complacent".

Industry observers see it as the first concerted attack on the lucrative stranglehold that British banks have had on credit cards. While UK institutions like Save & Prosper have tried launching low-rate credit cards before, the high-street banks still dominate the market and still charge rates of 22-23 per cent.

One American tiger, Advanta, set up a company in February with Royal Bank of Scotland to offer rates of less than 14 per cent for six months, followed by a standard rate of 15.6 per cent.

Mark Austin, planning and development manager at the RBS Advanta, said: "There has been a phoney war in the UK credit-card market for some years now. But the Americans

have done it in the US and they're serious. Over 30 per cent of people who have credit cards in the UK pay interest on them, and it's these people they're aiming at."

Two companies, MBNA and RBS Advanta, have been recruiting heavily in the UK since Christmas. MBNA entered the UK two years ago by linking with a range of British card issuers such as Allied Dunbar and Barnsley Building Society. The two other "tigers", Capital One and First US, are expected to follow suit.

The British have reacted this year by launching their own introductory rates – in reaction to the competition, not to falling base rates, according to their critics. Lloyds is offering 16 per cent for the first six months on its Mastercard, before switching to its usual rate of 22 per cent plus a £10 annual fee.

NatWest has been the most adventurous of the British banks by offering a 12 per cent introductory rate. But after that it will still charge 22.7 per cent, plus an annual fee of £12. It is not only wealthy customers that will be targeted by the Americans. RBS Advanta's benchmark is the over-21s earning over £10,000 a year. But they all use highly sophisticated credit-scoring databanks to "cherry pick" potential customers, hoping to leave the dodgy late-payers to the British.

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## news

## The house that tells the history of Britain



Eastry Court, near Sandwich, Kent, is listed as the oldest house in Britain and is on sale for £650,000

Photograph: Tony Buckingham

## ALISON TAYLOR.

It may look like a Georgian country residence, but Eastry Court is the oldest house in Britain. Dating from 603 AD, it can claim to be the birthplace of English Christianity and is on sale for £650,000.

Eastry Court, at Sandwich, Kent is an estate agent's dream, with period charm from the 14th, 16th and 18th centuries. Few houses can boast an "Inner Hall" with flagstone floors and exposed timbers. The Georgian facade conceals an interior which has been adapted

nearly every century. Its biggest selling point is its site, where some of the most dramatic events of the Dark Ages took place. Though only a few bits of the stonework remain, Eastry Court was an Anglo-Saxon palace belonging to the High King Ethelbert of Kent. He

married Bertha, the daughter of the King of Paris, who converted him to Christianity. She brought early Christians to England, including Augustine, the first Archbishop of Canterbury.

In the 9th century Ethelred the Unready gave the house to monks, seeking spiritual aid

against the marauding Swain Forkbeard. It brought him no luck - Swain's son, Canute, became the next King.

The owner, Marion Gear, said she would miss it, but added: "It's lovely when [the children] come back but it's just too big for me."

## Housekeeper tells of 3-day crash ordeal

REBECCA FOWLER

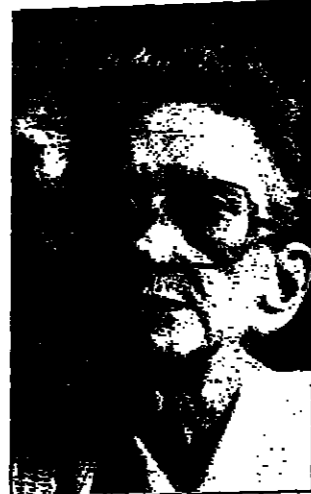
An Irish housekeeper who cared for a priest for 38 years yesterday described their three-day ordeal trapped in an overturned car, which ended in tragedy when he died before rescuers reached them.

Nancy Gallagher, 67, and Father Ambrose Woods, 83, from Carlingford in Co Louth, drove to their favourite beauty spot, to view the Mourne mountains where Ms Gallagher grew up. But on their journey home last Monday, the car plunged down a 30ft bank.

As it overturned, Fr Ambrose was thrown through the sunroof, and was trapped from the waist down, while Ms Gallagher fell into the boot area and was also unable to move. They shouted themselves hoarse but their calls were not heard from the remote spot. Without food and water, Fr Ambrose gradually became weaker. Ms Gallagher said: "On Tuesday he told me he was on his way out. I told him not to talk bull - that's one of my favourite phrases - then he said 'No Nancy, I'm really going'. He knew I couldn't reach him, so I put my hand on his shoulder and we said a prayer."

After praying to the Holy Spirit, and 20 hours into their ordeal, Fr Ambrose died.

Ms Gallagher said she was determined to survive alone because she was anxious to ensure he had a fitting funeral for a priest. Yesterday, her voice still hoarse from shouting, she said: "After we prayed I knew he was gone. It was so frustrating, not being able to do anything for him. For the first time in 38 years I wasn't able to help him and look after him." Ms Gal-



Ordeal: Nancy Gallagher (above) and Fr Ambrose



of friends. I used to argue and shout at him, and he used to raise his eyebrows, laugh and move into the next room and let me get on with it. He always said I had a tempery tongue, because I tend to swear."

The accident last week happened when Fr Ambrose sensed the car behind him was eager to overtake on the steep mountain road. He decided to pull over, but instead of braking, Fr Ambrose put his foot on the accelerator and the Nissan car fell down the overgrown embankment and landed beside a tree stump.

Ms Gallagher said: "There was no water in the car, nothing. I did think of having a cigarette, because I do sometimes, but I was worried about the petrol in the car. The main thing we did in the hours before the Father died was praying. Then I dozed off two or three times, and then at last I heard someone saying my name."

Eventually Ms Gallagher's cries were heard, at 6am on Thursday, by Tom Boyle, a local odd-job man who worked for Fr Ambrose. He raised the alarm when the couple went missing, and helped with the police search.

Ms Gallagher was taken to hospital in Dundalk suffering from dehydration. But she returned home this weekend to carry out her wish that Fr Ambrose, who will be buried today, should have the funeral he deserved.

Despite her sadness at Fr Ambrose's death, Ms Gallagher said: "Since I started working for him, I always prayed he would go first. I didn't want him left on his own, with no one to look after him."

## Major tries to save loyalist ceasefire

The Prime Minister will meet fringe Unionist leaders with links to loyalist paramilitaries today, amid growing concern that the loyalist ceasefire is in jeopardy, writes Rebecca Fowler.

John Major will meet a joint delegation from the Progressive Unionist Party, including the leader David Ervine, and from the Ulster Democratic Party, led by Gary McMichael, at Downing Street to discuss the future of the peace talks.

It is understood to be the first time that a British prime minister has held talks directly with the parties who have links to the UDA and UVF paramilitaries which announced a ceasefire six weeks after the IRA in 1994.

Mr McMichael said that he would be calling for a crack-down on the IRA in an attempt to salvage the peace process, following separate requests from both parties to speak to Mr Major.

He said: "It's up to all of us to do what we can to salvage the

situation. But there needs to be a strong hand from the government to isolate those republicans who want to agitate and return to violence."

There are also fears that the loyalist Apprentice Boys' march in Londonderry, on 10 August, will provoke further clashes with nationalists and bring Northern Ireland back to the brink of disaster. Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, will meet the Apprentice Boys at Stormont in Belfast this week to discuss possible routes for the parade, which ended in widespread violence in 1969 at the beginning of the Troubles.

Even last summer, when, following the ceasefire, the parade returned to its traditional route around the city walls for the first time in 25 years, violence broke out between loyalists and nationalists.

More than 15,000 loyalists are expected to attend the parade to commemorate the siege of the city in 1689. They hope to

march around the city walls in the morning, and through the city centre for a church service at St Columba's Cathedral in the afternoon. Most likely flash-points are with Protestants on the Fountain estate, and with Catholics from the Bogside estate. Talks between loyalists and the nationalists who live there are understood to have broken down.

At rallies in Londonderry last weekend nationalists also spoke of blockading the Craigavon Bridge to keep the parade out of the city. Gregory Campbell, a DUP member and an Apprentice Boy, said: "What cannot be up for negotiation is the right of the Apprentice Boys, who live and work in the city, to parade along the city's walls."

He added: "Nor the right of the Apprentice Boys to come into the city-centre side of the river where they have their headquarters, where there is a Protestant Cathedral, and the Protestant Fountain estate."



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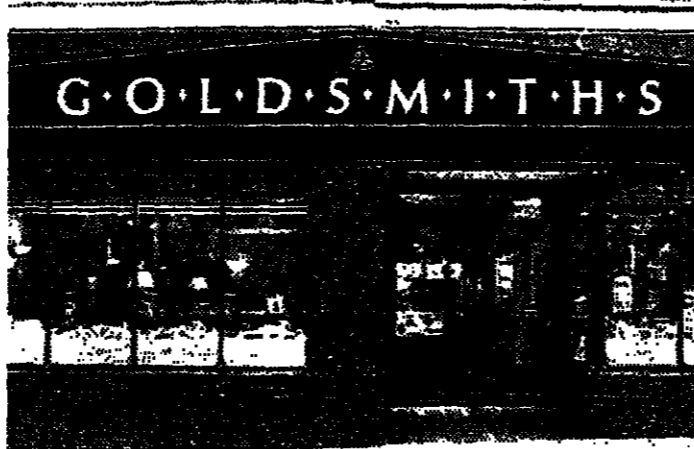
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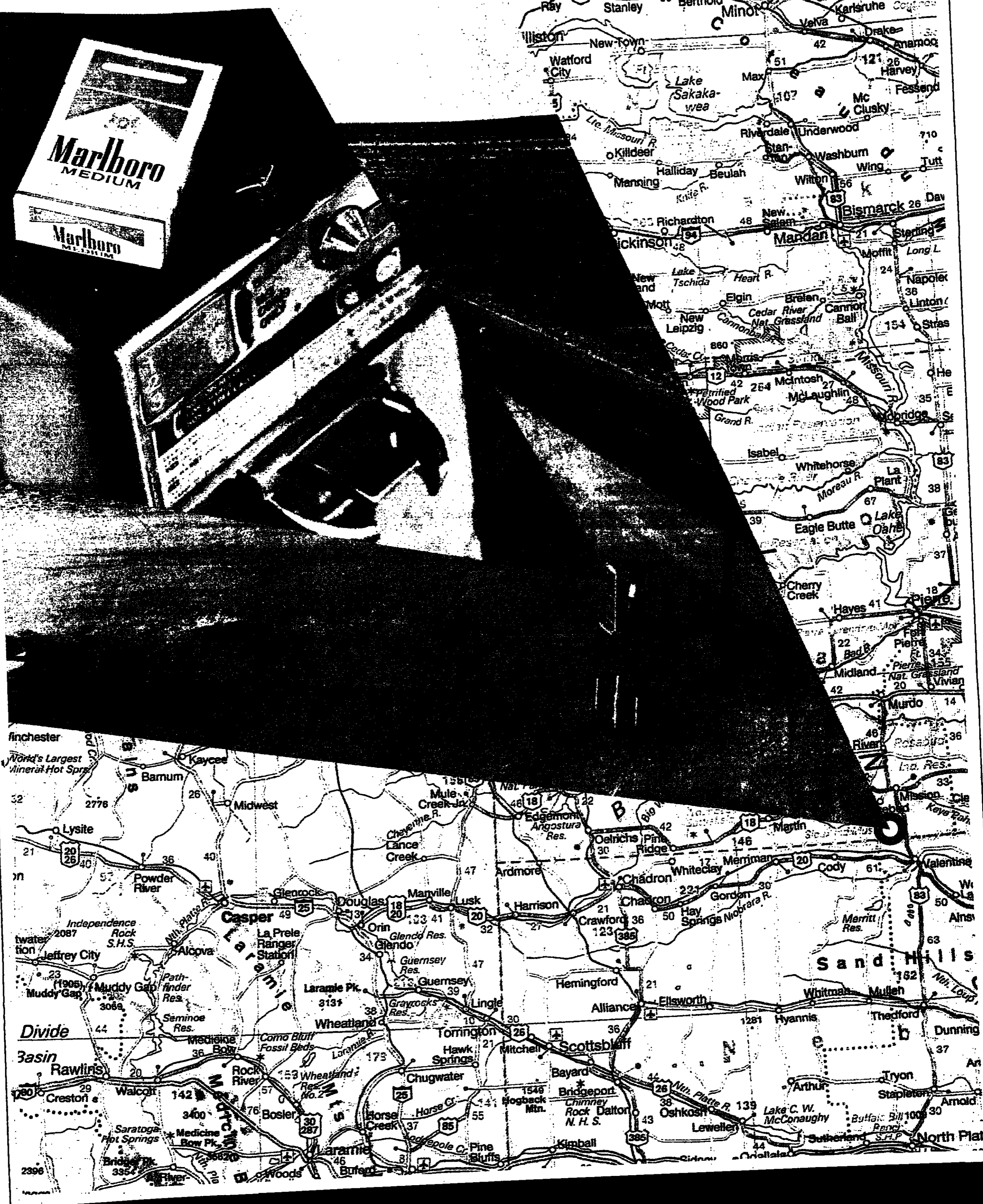
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## international

## Peru stunned by military aid to drug cartels

Callao — The President's custom-fitted DC-8 jetliner sat on the tarmac, engines running, all set for an important trip to Europe. President Alberto Fujimori was not on board for this one, just a Peruvian Air Force crew who told their mechanics they were on a "secret mission". They were not lying — but it was hardly an affair of state.

The aircraft never got off the ground. Out of nowhere at Air Force Base Number 8, in the port of Callao next to Lima's international airport, Peruvian police and senior air force officers surrounded the jet and began an on-board search. Behind the wall panels, where the President's bodyguards often sit, they found more than 380lb of pure processed cocaine, worth around £4.5m on the street.

The discovery, on 12 May, was just one of many drug hauls in recent weeks which stunned Peruvians because of the involvement of the air force and navy. More than 200 army officers had been prosecuted by military courts in recent years for involvement in narcotics-trafficking but the other branches of the armed forces were widely thought to be clean.

The navy has ordered a search of all its warships and cargo vessels after two naval cargo vessels were found to be carrying cocaine earlier this month, one at Callao, the other docked in Vancouver, Canada.

Each had over 100lb of cocaine on board, hidden in the engine room or in the funnel, enough to make a few naval officers very rich.

The recent seizures suggested army, air force and navy personnel were helping to ship both

Army, navy and air-force personnel are helping druglords, Phil Davison reports

coca paste and refined cocaine out of Peru on behalf of Colombian druglords feeling the heat from US-backed anti-narcotics sweeps in their own country.

Sixteen air-force officers or technical personnel, including one of Mr Fujimori's elite group of pilots, were detained after the cocaine haul on the presidential aircraft, which had apparently been due to stop in the US and both Western and Eastern Europe. Some of the detainees said the same plane — one of at least two used by the president — had shipped cocaine several times in the past, including when Mr Fujimori was on board but without his knowledge, according to police sources.

"I don't deny that there's been infiltration (in the armed forces by drug mafias) at some levels but capturing that amount of cocaine is good news," Mr Fujimori said after the seizure.

After the military suppression of the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) guerrillas in the early Nineties, army troops set up bases in isolated mountain and jungle areas and often took on one of the guerrillas' lucrative roles — taking "quotas" from druglords to protect their coca fields, laboratories or shipments, according to anti-narcotics agents here.

Peru is the world's biggest producer of coca leaf, the basis for coca paste and ultimately the refined powder, with a harvest last year of 183,000 tons. *Marijuana* (tea from the coca leaf) is widely available in

cafés and stores, although it is illegal in the US.

Whereas Peruvian gangs have long made coca paste from the leaf and shipped it to Colombian cartels for chemical refining in Colombian laboratories, the Colombians have themselves recently moved south to set up labs within Peru. "Recent crackdowns in Colombia have made things tighter up there," said one anti-narcotics agent here. "Now, it's easier for the Colombians to set up down here, in isolated mountain and jungle areas, refine their product on the spot and ship it directly to the US or Europe. All they have to do is get chemicals in and their shipments out. That's where pay-offs to the military come in."

The agent said recent anti-narcotics sweeps on both sides of the Peru-Colombia border have led to a doubling of smuggling from the Iquitos area in northern Peru, east along the Amazon, often by speedboat, into Brazil. Former Shining Path guerrillas are among smugglers who pay local peasants to carry the drugs across the jungle border.

A Brazilian woman, two Colombian men and two Peruvian policemen were among a gang of 25 smugglers arrested in Lima and Iquitos at the weekend. More than 460 pounds of cocaine paste was seized by anti-narcotics police who said the gang was led by a Colombian druglord who operated in his own country and who was still at large.



Regal touch: The 17th-century statue of King Zygmunt III Waza being removed from a column in front of the Royal Castle in Warsaw for restoration. Photograph: AFP

## SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

**A** North Korean agent in disguise as a Filipino professor has taught in a South Korean university since the 1980s, the government's main spy agency said yesterday. Mohammad Kalso, an assistant history professor at Seoul's Dankook University, was arrested early this month on charges of illegally communicating with North Korea. Mr Kalso was accused of reporting by fax to North Korea on US and South Korean policies on North Korea and US military deployments in the south. AP — Seoul

**R**ussian troops pushed ahead with an attack on a rebel base in Chechnya's southern mountains, but said bad weather hampered their operations. Two army engineers were killed when they were hit by rebel fire on the second day of the offensive against the base near Shatoi, the federal command said. AP — Grozny

**R**escue workers in China have airlifted hundreds of tons of food and more than one million bottles of mineral water to a city swamped by floods in the south-west of the country. Only a few areas of high ground in the city of Lijzhou in Guangxi province escaped the flooding after the water level of the Lujiang river surged to its highest mark this century. "The whole city is under water," a city government official said. Reuters — Peking

**P**resident Nelson Mandela's recent official visit to France has revived speculation in South Africa about his love life. The Johannesburg Sunday Times reported that while in Paris, Mr Mandela met at least three times with Graca Machel, a UN official and widow of a former Mozambican president. Their meetings included a lunch in President Mandela's suite at the state guest house, and dinner with a small group of friends at the residence of Barbara Masekela, South Africa's Ambassador to France, the paper said. It added that Ms Machel flew to South Africa with the President on his official jet when his four-day visit ended last Thursday. AP — Johannesburg

**A** questionnaire distributed by Palestinian intelligence agents that asks Palestinian journalists about their political backgrounds and whether their relatives have ever been accused of spying has drawn strong criticism. Circulated among Palestinian reporters in the Gaza Strip, it asks such questions as: "Do you belong to a political party?", and "Name your close relatives and friends". The Arab Journalists Association called on reporters not to fill out the form. "It is not acceptable to deal with the Palestinian journalist as a spy," said Mohammed Dawoudi, an official of the organisation. AP — Jerusalem

**A** prison inmate on hunger strike has died, a human rights official said — the first fatality among 1,500 leftist and Kurdish inmates fasting throughout Turkey since May to protest against prison conditions. The inmate, Aygun Ugur, was a member of the banned Marxist-Leninist Communist Party, and had been on hunger strike at the high-security Umraniye jail for 63 days, said Ibrahim Varol, an official of Turkey's independent Human Rights Association. "We expect more deaths," he said. Ugur's death came two weeks after Turkey's new Islamic-inspired government cancelled strict prison policies in an effort to end the hunger strikes. AP — Istanbul

**T**he son of the late Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos attacked a US jury's \$22bn (£14bn) judgment against his family as absurd, saying it implied that the Marcoses had twice as much gold as there was in Fort Knox. Reuters — Manila

**A**n Italian teenager shot in the head at point-blank range as he prepared to hand over a scooter to a gang of thieves was in a coma and doctors described him as clinically dead. Reuters — Naples

**D**ubai's oldest man has died at the age of 136. Long walks and a diet of quail and bread helped the retired mosque preacher Ali Matar bin Ghurair reach his advanced age, Dubai papers said at the weekend. He is survived by 103 grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and one of his sons is 98. The Guinness Book of World Records recognises Frenchwoman Jeanne Calment as the oldest person in the world with a birth certificate proving she is 121. Reuters — Dubai

## Nixon diary damns Clinton as cowardly adulterer



Nixon: Attacks Clinton for dodging draft in Vietnam

ARTHUR SPIEGELMAN  
Reuters

New York — Richard Nixon thought Bill Clinton a "slippery" character who got away with adultery and behaved like a cowardly spoiled brat during the Vietnam War, according to excerpts from a new book by a close aide to the former president, released yesterday.

But the book, *Nixon Unplugged* excerpted in the New Yorker magazine, says Nixon came to admire Mr Clinton as President, partly because the Democrat treated him with respect, inviting him back to the White House from which he was forced in disgrace in 1974.

The book, by Monica Crowley, Nixon's foreign-policy assistant, said Nixon detested First Lady Hillary Clinton, dismissing her as a potentially dangerous radical locked in a loveless marriage.

The one person who emerges with Nixon's unqualified praise is the Republican Party's prospective presidential candidate, Bob Dole, who Nixon calls the only one in "the country who can lead. He is by far the smartest politician — and Republican — in the country today."

Ms Crowley went to work for Nixon in 1990 when she was 21 years old and stayed until he died in 1994. She accompanied him to Russia and Asia, sitting

in on his talks with heads of state. Without Nixon's knowledge, she kept a diary of their conversations.

Nixon thought Mr Clinton was an adulterer, telling Ms Crowley: "You know, this is really something. This guy didn't just have a fling; he had a 12-year affair. He's a repeat offender, and as governor no less."

"That's arrogance of power! But I still don't think it will destroy him. He's too slippery to have anything like this stick. And, as far as Hillary is concerned... She's a radical. If she gets in, whoa! Everybody will have to fasten their seat belts."

Nixon showed no sympathy over the Whitewater real estate

venture, which has haunted the Clintons. "Here you have financial gain and abuse of power... and nothing is done. And here was Hillary on [Nixon's] impeachment committee... screaming about the eighteen-and-a-half minutes [gap on a crucial tape recording] and now she's in Little Rock shredding."

Nixon held Mrs Clinton in special contempt because she worked for the House committee that considered impeaching him. He was also harsh and unforgiving toward Mr Clinton for avoiding service during the Vietnam War.

"I cannot believe this guy is a serious contender for the presidency. I know why he did

what he did to dodge the draft: he didn't want to get his ass shot off," Ms Crowley quoted Nixon as telling her in 1992, adding:

"He is a coward and a fraud. He didn't serve his country when it needed him, so why should we have him serve it when he is ready? ... When he evaded the draft, he cheated the country and the people whose votes he is asking for... He was no conscientious objector, he was a selfish, spoiled brat."

The former president added: "He made my job harder and he sent God knows how many men to their deaths in his place. I'll tell you, if he is elected president, I will know this country has finally gone to hell."

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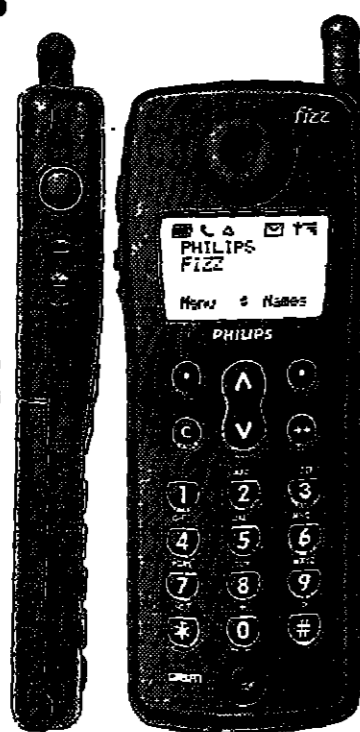
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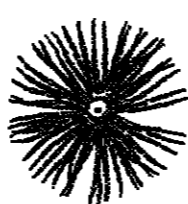
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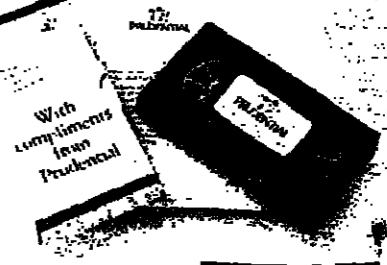
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PRUDENTIAL

# Israel and Hizbollah swap their dead

ROBERT FISK  
War correspondent, southern Lebanon

The Israeli dead went home in the morning, in steel coffins reverently placed on a German military aircraft for the brief flight to Tel Aviv.

The Hizbollah dead came home in cheap wooden boxes, bouncing in the back of 17 construction lorries, to be pushed amid screams of grief into more than 100 black, white and brown hearses that were parked amid the hot olive groves of southern Lebanon.

In a country where the dead always come first, it was probably inevitable that the living prisoners - 17 members of Israel's proxy militia in southern Lebanon, and 45 inmates of the notorious, Israeli-run Khiam jail - were still waiting to be liberated at dusk.

There were family mourners in Israel for Rahmuni Al-Sheikh and Yusef Fink, the two Israeli soldiers wounded and captured in a Hizbollah ambush inside Lebanon in 1986, both of whom died in captivity. And there were thousands of Hizbollah men and grieving families for the 123 "martyrs" when their bodies were unloaded from the trucks, some youths even fighting each other in their rage on top of the coffins.

Many of the dead were killed in Hizbollah's human wave attacks on Israeli occupation troops in the late 1980s, though others had been killed recently enough for the mourners to cover their faces with handkerchiefs as the trucks drove past.

If there was grief in both Israel and Lebanon, there was at least some triumph for the German security services who - of all people - had brought about this extraordinary, if gruesome, body-swap. The close relationship between Bernd Schmidbauer, Chancellor Kohl's security adviser, and the heads of the Iranian secret service - a panacea forcefully condemned by Israel last year - was found to be of use by the Israelis after all. It enabled Mr Schmidbauer to bring Iranian and Syrian intelligence authorities together in Damascus before confirming that the exchange of bodies and prisoners could go ahead.

After French intervention

during Israel's April bombardment of Lebanon, the new German initiative has again brought a European Union nation into Middle East peace-making, in however minor a role.

Mr Schmidbauer's own personal role is also intriguing. In 1982, he was instrumental in freeing two German hostages, Heinrich Strube and Thomas Kempner, who had been kidnapped by the family of a man imprisoned in Germany for hijacking an American TWA jet to Beirut in 1985. Again, Mr Schmidbauer used Iranian intelligence officers to complete the releases after Syria gave its consent to the negotiations.

It may not have been by chance that an Iranian television crew was filming the convoy of lorries as it carried the Hizbollah dead across the Israeli occupation line yesterday afternoon.

But the exchanges were not without potentially grave problems. The 45 prisoners from Khiam - some of whom had been held for more than 10 years without trial, and three of whom were women - were kept waiting in buses through the midday heat because the Israelis found that it was, in the words of one officer, "taking longer than we thought" to transfer 123 coffins from Israeli lorries to trucks hired by the Red Cross. The corpses had been interred in northern Israel.

Then the Red Cross, which had earlier supervised the removal of the two Israeli bodies from the Bir al-Abed suburb of the capital to Beirut airport, suddenly discovered that the 17 members of the Israeli-paid "South Lebanon Army" who were to be sent back to Israel's occupation zone didn't want to return. They sat in the Red Cross cars just west of the front lines, staring at the quizzical - and not entirely friendly - Hizbollah men looking at them intently through the vehicle windows, two of them in tears.

All said they wanted to remain in Beirut: the SLA had stated a few hours earlier that the prisoners had been brainwashed by the Hizbollah, a claim which lost none of its force when Hizbollah's own television station showed each of the 17 prisoners kissing the forehead of the Hizbollah's



Happy day: Laila Baalbaki with her brother Issam, freed after a body-swap with the Hizbollah

Photograph: AP

general secretary, Sayed Hasan Nasrallah.

The Red Cross resolved the problem by allowing the SLA prisoners to travel, three at a time, to their former colleagues on the Israeli lines, and to announce whether or not they wished to go back to their

militia units or stay in Beirut. Back in the olive fields, there were prayers over the plywood coffins in a clearing ringed by black flags and weeping women, interrupted only by the tinkling of dozens of mobile telephones in the hands of the still living Hizbollah men.

## Scavengers meet swift response

STEPHANIE NOLEN  
Jerusalem

Following newspaper reports that hundreds of Palestinians were coming to the main Jerusalem rubbish dump each day to scavenge for food and junk to sell, the Israeli government has moved swiftly to tackle the problem - in its own way.

Two heavily armed Israeli guards who live in a settlement in the West Bank city of Hebron have now been posted at the

entrance to the dump, to keep out would-be scavengers - and, especially, foreign journalists.

"They are here to keep us away," said Ali Hamdan, 40, who travels from Hebron himself each day to search for scrap metal and old clothes to sell. "But mostly the guards are here because of the journalists. They really don't like the journalists."

The Independent's first reported the crowds at the dump, two weeks ago, in a story about the worsening economic crisis in the West Bank

and Gaza Strip, caused by the Israelis having closed those areas. Most of the people at the dump used to work in Israel, before the closure was imposed following a series of suicide bombings in Israel in February and March.

Until last week, up to 800 people were coming to the dump each day. Now, only 30 or 40 people plough through the refuse; they sneak in over the hills to the south to avoid the guards. Mr Hamdan said that the guards periodically wave

their guns and chase people off the garbage heap, but largely ignore them. Their presence at the gates, he said, has been enough to keep most people away, especially the crowds of children who used to hunt for food in the garbage.

"I guard the Arabs, to make sure they don't take anything," the burly dump guard told The Independent. Then, fingering the trigger on his massive machine gun, he added: "You should go away, too. Right now."

## Italy's TV sleaze comes out of the box

ANDREW GUMBEL  
Rome

Perhaps it was inevitable that the sleaze that oozes out of Italian television screens would begin to stick to the presenters and programme-makers. The semi-naked women, bad game shows and voyeuristic exercises in humiliation that pass for small-screen family entertainment were the subject of no fewer than three criminal investigations this weekend, suggesting the existence of a seamy underbelly beneath the shiny teeth and glittery swansails.

Italy's most famous television presenter, Pippo Baudo, was being bombarded with allegations of unethical behaviour, including suggestions that he rigged a New Year's Eve show that was broadcast live to the nation; promoted personal friends to take part in variety show contests; and allowed himself to be bribed when picking contestants for this year's San Remo music festival.

One particularly squalid programme, *Telecamere a rischio* - "TV cameras at risk" - a sort of *Candid Camera* in which husbands-to-be are secretly filmed being chatted up by actresses to test their fidelity - was being pursued for inciting violence after one "guest" lost his temper once the trick was revealed, and knocked his would-be seducer to the ground.

Most damaging, though, were allegations that the pretty teenage girls adorning virtually every programme, from Sunday afternoon variety shows to evening satires on current events, are being systematically abused for sexual favours and "traded" among producers and personalities to pay off favours within both the state and the private broadcasting system.

According to magistrates working out of Biella in north-western Italy, girls as young as 15 are forced to have sex with talent scouts and their friends as the price for getting onto the small screen. Valerio Merola, a talent scout who works for Silvio Berlusconi's Italia Uno channel, has just spent 10 days in custody on charges of pimping and sexual violence. Gigi Sa-

bani, a well-known presenter, is under house arrest, and Gianni Boncompagni, a producer, is being formally investigated.

The evidence produced by a flurry of witnesses, including several of the girls themselves, depicts unholily power games in which would-be models are coerced into squalid assignments in hotel rooms, then dumped and forgotten as often as they are helped up the career ladder.

One witness, Mr Sabani's former chauffeur, has suggested that television executives have passed the girls around their friends in exchange for cash, and even offered them to politicians with an interest in broadcasting, as a form of bribe.

The newspapers are dubbing the scandal *varietypoli*, in an echo of the *tangettopoli* investigation into political bribery a few years ago, and are rubbing their hands in anticipation of more revelations. But the chauffeur, Giuseppe Pagano, has yet to name names in public.

Mr Merola, interviewed shortly after his release from jail yesterday morning, did not deny having sexual relations with his protégées but insisted there was nothing criminal about his behaviour. He described one liaison, with a 15-year-old from Modena who accused him of rape, as "intense but brief".

The case has prompted an extraordinary outpouring of views that reflect not only Italy's attitude to its small-screen entertainment but also its feelings about show business, women with careers, and sex in general. While Catholic groups have denounced the moral turpitude of the entertainment business, one prominent broadcaster has argued that weird sexual practices have been the hallmark of artists down the centuries and are thus a vital part of western culture.

The mother of one model insisted the scandal was the fault of the girls themselves. "Let's be honest," she said. "Sometimes it is the girls who are the provocatrix, and the men - well, they are just men." This did not, of course, include her daughter, a showgirl called Alessia Gioffrè, whom she described as a young woman of "healthy principles".

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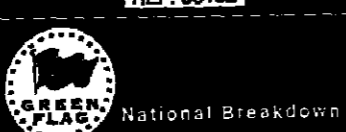
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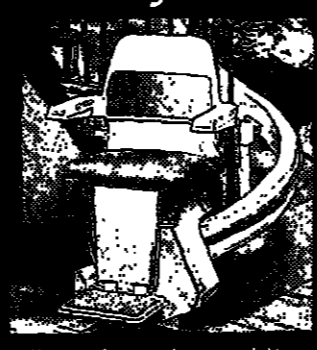
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## international

## Jet crash inquiry faces long haul

JOHN CARLIN  
Washington

TWA disaster: Bomb theory grows as search for evidence goes on

The task of solving the mystery of TWA Flight 800, which crashed off the coast of Long Island, New York, last week killing 230 people, will present a big challenge. American investigators have yet to explain why, in September 1994, a Boeing 737 plunged to earth over Pittsburgh killing all 132 people aboard – so it may take some time before the reasons for this disaster come to light.

On Wednesday, the explosion of the Boeing 747 jumbo jet over the Atlantic Ocean scattered wreckage over a wide area that may turn out to encompass 500 square miles to depths of between 100 feet and 200 feet.

To complicate matters further the weather has been variable – at times foggy, at times rainy – and the seas have been choppy to rough. Diving for wreck-

age has so far been impossible.

Extraordinarily difficult preliminary salvage work will have to be completed before the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation will be able to examine the evidence. Evidence which, if they are skillful and fortunate, too, may provide them with sufficient clues to be able to announce the probable cause of the disaster.

By yesterday, despite a massive deployment of resources, 130 bodies remained unaccounted for, and of the 100 bodies recovered, only 23 had been positively identified. Only one per cent of the aircraft itself had been recovered.

The two black boxes containing the flight data recorder and the cockpit voice recorder, have not yet been located. The aircraft's fuselage, which, in-

vestigators hope, will contain valuable evidence and most of the missing bodies, may, however, have been located with navy sonar devices. "May" – as in every utterance involving the investigation so far – remains the operative word, though. "They have found a trail of material on the [ocean] bottom," said Robert Francis, the NTSB vice-chairman heading on-site investigations.

Despite the lack of evidence, investigators have made it plain in their public statements, and in their off-the-record asides to reporters, that they believe TWA 800 was downed by a bomb. "The chances that this was a mechanical failure are slim," said Jim Kallstrom, the director of the FBI joint anti-terrorist task force investigating the crash. "The least likely thing, minus the forensics

– which we are waiting for – is mechanical. That is just common sense."

Why is it common sense? Clive Irving, a New York-based British author who has written a book about Boeing and the 747, articulates – with more inside knowledge than most – what has become conventional informed opinion.

"There is no previous example of a complete and instantaneous catastrophe involving a 747 that was not a bomb," Mr Irving said. "If it had been a structural failure the degree of disintegration would not have been so sudden, especially if you take into account the sheer size of the 747."

But the means employed by the presumptive "cowards", in Mr Kallstrom's words, to blow up the aircraft, remain at this stage an unfathomable mys-

tery. The mystery, meanwhile, has opened the door for television pundits to engage in a riot of guesswork.

One version put forward has it that a bomb was smuggled aboard the aircraft inside a metal box containing transplant organs. A box of this type would not have been subjected to the same electronic scrutiny as, say, the average suitcase.

Another idea is that the aircraft was shot down by a land-to-air missile, fired either from the Long Island shore or from a small boat.

One alternative suggestion is that a terrorist in Athens placed inside the jet a bomb that managed to escape detection all along the route – during the five-hour period up to TWA 800's arrival in New York, and prior to, and after, its departure on the fateful flight to Paris. Per-

haps the most intriguing theory propounded so far by a television expert – who was interviewed on Friday on Washington's Channel Eight – was that the aircraft had been struck by a meteorite falling to earth.

In the frenzy of speculation going on somehow it has almost been forgotten that the bereaved families of those who died in the disaster care little about what, or who, caused the crash. Much less do they wish to turn their attention to that other subject of keen interest to the news-bereft media at the moment – how to prevent future calamities.

The heart-rending priority of the families and friends now standing helplessly by, is to recover and identify the bodies of their loved ones – to begin their mourning and to give the dead decent burials.

But even that accepted consequence seems as though it will be some way off yet.

## Setting Seattle straight on sex and politics

LOCAL  
HEROES

No 26: Dan Savage

Most of American politics, Dan Savage explains, boils down to sex. Abortion, gay rights, single mothers on welfare, women's roles, sex education, the whole family values thing – "at bottom it's all about sex".

"It's why Clinton is such a controversial President," he continues, as two elderly women moved away from his table at a Seattle sandwich bar. "You can perceive that this is a man who might actually enjoy sex. Bush and Reagan were sort of sexless. The last president who went for it was Kennedy."

Seattle, the Pacific Rim port a stone's throw from the Canadian border, has earned a reputation in recent years as America's hippest city. Californians have headed there in droves, abandoning perpetual sunshine for weather that is arguably worse than Britain's. Mr Savage dismisses it as provincial and dull. The clubs that gave birth to grunge rock are closed for refurbishment, he says. The cappuccino bars on every corner, in the home city of the Starbucks chain, are becoming passé. Even the heroin scene is overblown, he says.

This spring, however, *Newsweek* magazine devoted a cover story to the lures of Seattle. It named Dan Savage, sex-advice columnist and drag queen, as one of the city's most influential people, alongside Microsoft billionaire Bill Gates and the Mayor, Norm Rice.

Mr Savage's column, *Savage Love*, is billed as a gay man's answers to the sex problems of straight people. It appears in a local weekly, the *Stranger*, and in 16 alternative newspapers nationwide, including the *Village Voice* in New York, and the *Chicago Reader*, with a combined readership of over a million. He receives about 150 letters a week, some from as far away as Australia and Israel, and usually addressed: "Hey, Faggot".

Straight people need gays to guide them on non-procreative sex, he says. Straight sex is simply a matter of "put tab A in slot B". Gay men and women by contrast have to address their sexual desires, and how to fulfil them, from an early age.

The Americans' attitude to sex, he says, is both immature and weird. Sex education is taught as biology, all fallopian tubes and urethras, instead of

as a pleasurable pursuit. "It's like teaching people how to drive by teaching them the workings of the internal combustion engine," he said. "They take the car out and smash it into a wall."

His column, while mostly unprintable in a family newspaper, and often offensive, is also moralistic. In five years, he boasts, "I have raised a whole generation of young women to insist on their right to orgasm, first."

In a recent Seattle poll he was easily voted the city's favourite columnist. His term for straight people – "breeders" – has entered the local lexicon.

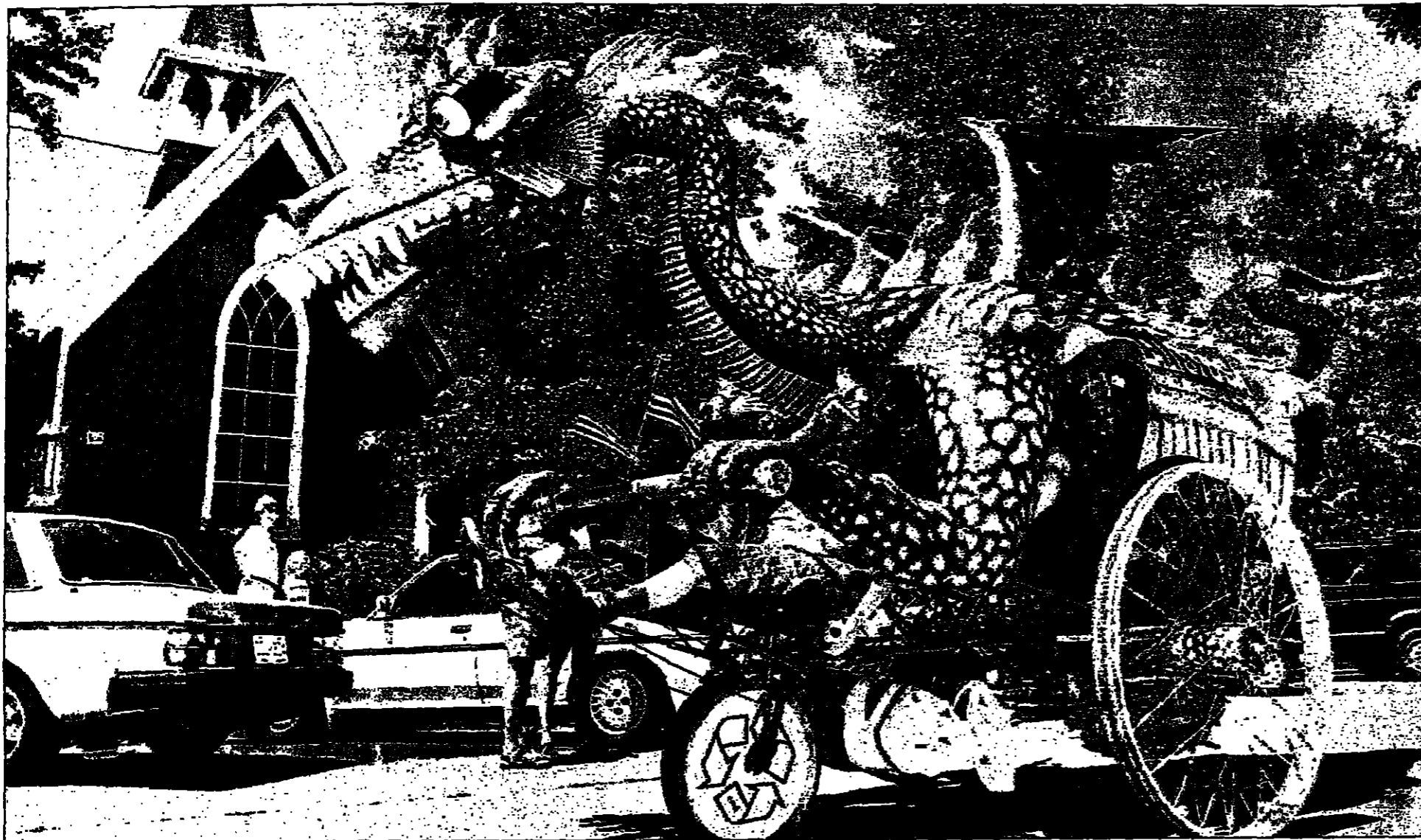
Once a month Mr Savage hosts gay bingo, in drag, for about 500 people, to raise funds for AIDS victims. The event has been sold out every evening since he started calling the numbers three years ago.

Seattle's deputy mayor recently presented him with a sequined T-shirt as thanks for his campaign for a local park. He has a Sunday night radio show, is in demand as a speaker at local universities, and recently signed on with a publisher for a two-book deal on sex and politics.

In New York, the 31-year-old Mr Savage might be lost in the wash. In Seattle, he stands out. The son of a Chicago policeman, from an Irish Catholic family, he once studied for the priesthood and worked for two years in Britain waiting tables.

This spring, Mr Savage joined the local Republican Party. By standing unopposed for the office of Precinct Committee Officer, he found himself a delegate at the county convention on the Pat Buchanan slate. He then hijacked an event that drew 1,600 local Republicans with a string of amendments to write support for same-sex marriage and the repeal of sodomy laws into the party platform, chronicling the ensuing mayhem in his column. "It's how the Christian Right took over the Republican Party," he said. "All they did was just go."

Tim Cornwell



Pedal-powered dragon: The 'Dragoons' team propel their kinetic sculpture through the streets of Corvallis, Oregon, in the DaVinci Days parade. Photograph: Tony Overman/AP

Cartoonists in peril: In cultures as diverse as Hong Kong and Algeria, a climate of fear means comic strips are no longer a joke

## Artists' courage withers in Big Brother's shadow

STEPHEN VINES  
Hong Kong

"If you're scared, don't come in," says the sign at the entrance to an exhibition of cartoons by Zanzi. Hong Kong's best known and most controversial cartoonist. The sign seems exaggerated. After all, inside the exhibition hall there is nothing more than a series of cartoons.

However, outspoken cartoonists are an endangered species in Hong Kong. Only a handful of artists produce political cartoons and few publications will carry their work.

The dark shadow of China's rule, which begins next year, hangs over cartoonists as it does over many other artists who are likely to be regarded as dissidents. Larry Feign, an American who has been drawing

cartoons in Hong Kong for more than a decade, says he is demoralised. He claims newspapers will only publish cartoons which "take no sides and express no opinions".

This is not Feign's style. Last year he was fired by the *South China Morning Post* newspaper, where he had a big following, on account of his "Lily Wong" cartoon strip. It was killed off after a possibly prophetic strip about killings of cartoonists.

China has long recognised that cartoons are a valuable political weapon, although political cartoons started to emerge in China only about 60 years ago, during the Sino-Japanese war. The Chinese Communist Party quickly grasped the value of this medium; many officials in charge of arts matters in China are former cartoonists.

China's tradition of political cartoons is not one of belly laughs. It draws on a knowledge of Chinese history and philosophy, presenting ideas as allegories. This makes the cartoons impenetrable for non-Chinese readers.

Zanzi says he tries to be funny. He stresses that his main aim "is to give my opinion, and if I can change society to a more liberal society, that would be great". But he dislikes the idea of imposing his views on the readers, saying he really wants to make people think for themselves.

In China itself cartoonists are restrained, although Feign believes they "can go a little further than anyone else" in expressing controversial views.

He recalls the furor about seven years ago, when a cartoon was published which showed the Chinese leader, Deng Xiaoping, playing bridge and smoking, using the traditional cartoonist's technique of exaggerating his features. Nowadays a caricature of this kind could scarcely be published.

As for Zanzi, his stock in trade is making fun of Chinese leaders. After the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, he published a particularly savage cartoon, showing Mr Deng and the Chinese Prime Minister, Li Peng, sitting in an actor's dressing room, applying bloody-looking lipstick. Mr Deng is seen reading a script entitled "The World's Greatest Leader", while on the floor a democracy protester is dying.

Zanzi does not spare British leaders. The former governor, David Wilson, was depicted as a colonial buffoon in a feathered cap. Chris Patten, the current Governor, is usually shown as a fat man who is bewildered by his surroundings.

How long does Zanzi think he can get away with his style of work? "It depends entirely on the political situation," he says. "We can see that the situation is becoming worse in the field



Risky business: Zanzi shows China's premier, Li Peng, as an ape (above); a pen makes a stand for freedom

of freedom of speech. A lot of newspapers are changing their attitude towards China. More and more newspapers are reluctant to use political cartoons."

So, will he tone down his cartoons? "I don't think it's necessary to use cartoons as a means of earning a living", he

says. "If I can't publish in the newspapers, I won't squeeze myself by drawing things I don't like". He says he would be happy to switch to the Internet, or to producing banners for protesters. And if all these avenues are blocked and he lands in jail, Zanzi says: "I'll draw on the walls of the jail".

## Politics is deadly subject in world of Arab despots

CHARLES RICHARDS

It is no laughing matter, being a political cartoonist in the Arab world. Earlier this month, Chawki Lamari, a cartoonist on the Algerian French language daily, *La Tribune*, was arrested at home and hauled off to Serkaji, a top-security prison which gained notoriety after 100 Islamist prisoners were killed when the authorities re-established order after a riot.

Publication of *La Tribune* was suspended. Police took the publisher of the newspaper, Khelreddine Ameyar, and the editor, Baya Gacemi, for questioning. A judge later ordered them to report to the police twice a week. The three men will stand trial together on 29 July.

The issue was a cartoon showing Algerian flags strung between houses along a street. One asks: "Is this for 5 July?" (Algerian Independence Day, a date central to the armed forces' claim to legitimacy).

An examining magistrate ruled that the cartoon was in breach of Article 160 of the Penal Code. This stipulates prison terms of 5 to 10 years for "anyone who deliberately and publicly tears up, defaces or defiles the national symbol".

A statement by the Algerian journalists union, the *Assemblée Générale des Journalistes*, which denounced the legal

proceedings, said the move would not stop journalists from "continuing their struggle until their colleague Amari is released and legal action against *La Tribune* dropped".

In some respects the case was distinctly Algerian. But the case is symptomatic of the dangers cartoonists face when they cross the line in ridiculing the authorities in an Arab world ruled largely by despots.

The golden age of the political caricature was the pre-revolutionary period in Egypt. This permitted Egyptian irreverence for authority and satirical genius to find expression in weekly news magazines. The British were easy targets, but so were the political leaders, although the king was off-limits.

Nasser's coup in 1952 banned parties and limited freedom of expression. Thereafter the number of subjects which could be tackled in the press without risking the censor's blue pencil (or worse) shrank.

Today Egyptian cartoonists can allude to corruption in high places, which cannot be proved but which everyone knows about, more easily than can columnists, who would have to name names. In a culture where the rate of illiteracy is high, cartoons still have great power.

Censors are well attuned to the influence that a well-wrought political caricature

may exert. Such was the popularity of the Moroccan satirical magazine *Akhbar al Suq* (News from the Market) that it was banned.

In the most celebrated case, the Palestinian cartoonist, Naji Ali, was gunned down in London in 1987, apparently for alluding to Yasser Arafat's Egyptian mistress.

In some parts of the Middle East, editors commission cartoonists to send a message they dare not convey in writing. The freest Arabic press is now found in London, although most of it is owned by Saudi interests which do not tolerate discussion of subjects sensitive to them.

Ibad al Khazen, editor of *Al-Hayat*, says that when the paper was published in Beirut "the tradition was that the editor and the cartoonists would discuss ideas together". Since the cartoonists' consultation with the editor has diminished.

Although there is no heavy-handed political authority exercising the censor's scissors, the ownership of the paper instils a measure of self-censorship which ensures that no anti-Saudi material is covered.

"We deal overwhelmingly with Arab political issues, such as Israel's attack on south Lebanon, not with domestic terrorism, human rights, or democracy," he says.

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# Harman boost in Shadow elections

COLIN BROWN  
Chief Political Correspondent

Harriet Harman's chances of securing her seat in the Shadow Cabinet were given a boost yesterday by John Prescott, the deputy leader of the Labour Party. Mr Prescott has given his full backing for the Shadow Cabinet "slate" to be voted in during Wednesday's elections to avoid giving ammunition to the Tories with splits in the party.

Mr Prescott gave a clear lead to the party's left-wing to vote for the status quo and avoid rocking the boat. The *Independent* learned that one left-wing challenger, Irene Addams, had dropped out of the race, giving Ms Harman, the shadow health spokeswoman, a freer run.

"I was going to stand but I thought there was going to be a whole card of candidates. What I was not going to do is stand alone. It would be seen only as a challenge to Harriet Harman which it never was," said Ms Addams.

Ms Harman's only challenger now will be Ann Chwyd, who is backed by the Campaign Group of left-wing Labour MPs. The "status quo" slate to be re-elected, said Mr Prescott, would include Jack Cunningham, following the standing down of overseas development spokeswoman Joan Lester.

Labour leader, Tony Blair, and Mr Prescott, have met front-benchers to seek their support for the "status quo" slate, recognising that the move could deny some shadow ministers the chance of a place in the first Labour cabinet for 18 years.

Mr Prescott was instrumental in persuading the leadership to go ahead with the elections

and for implementing the strategy to avoid damaging battles for places in the Shadow Cabinet in the election run-up.

Ms Harman's decision to send her son to a grammar school caused the backlash that now threatens her place on the Shadow Cabinet. If Ms Harman were dropped, critics argue, Mr Blair would come under renewed attack for choosing to send his son, Evan, to the London Oratory, an opted-out school, and yet more criticism for thinking of sending his second son, Nicky, now aged nine, to the same school. "It makes sense for the younger boy to go the same school as his brother, although we haven't finally decided that," Mr Blair said.

To add to the tension, allegations of vote-rigging, reported in Saturday's *Independent*, have continued. Diane Abbott, member of the National Executive Committee, and Labour MP for Hackney North and Stoke Newington, said Ms Harman seemed to have her own assisted-places scheme. "If they stuff ballot boxes, of course she'll make it back. In a straightforward secret ballot I don't think she would [return]," said Ms Abbott.

But Ms Harman reinforced her claim to be judged on her record as shadow health spokeswoman by issuing new figures from her office showing that there had been a new rise in hospital waiting lists, in spite of the Government's drive to reduce them. In the South Thames region, the number waiting more than a year had gone up from 23 to 430 between March and May. She said it showed that the Tories were failing in their own priorities.



Harriet Harman: Backed by Prescott for re-election



Ann Chwyd: Intervention could limit her vote

## Jewish group seeks Internet block on racism

ANDREW BROWN

A Jewish think-tank has called for the Internet to be brought under the same legal controls as book publishing. Lack of legislation, the Institute of Jewish Policy Research says, is giving users of the electronic network a unique chance to broadcast material from anti-semitic and other obnoxious groups.

The Institute wants the companies that sell Internet access to be treated as the publishers of the material accessed through their services, and not to act as if they were no more responsible than telephone firms.

In a report published tomorrow, the Institute says: "The Internet has provided a relatively regulation-free environment for the publication of racist material and the organisation of the activities of neo-Nazi and other far-right organisations, and terrorist and extremist groups."

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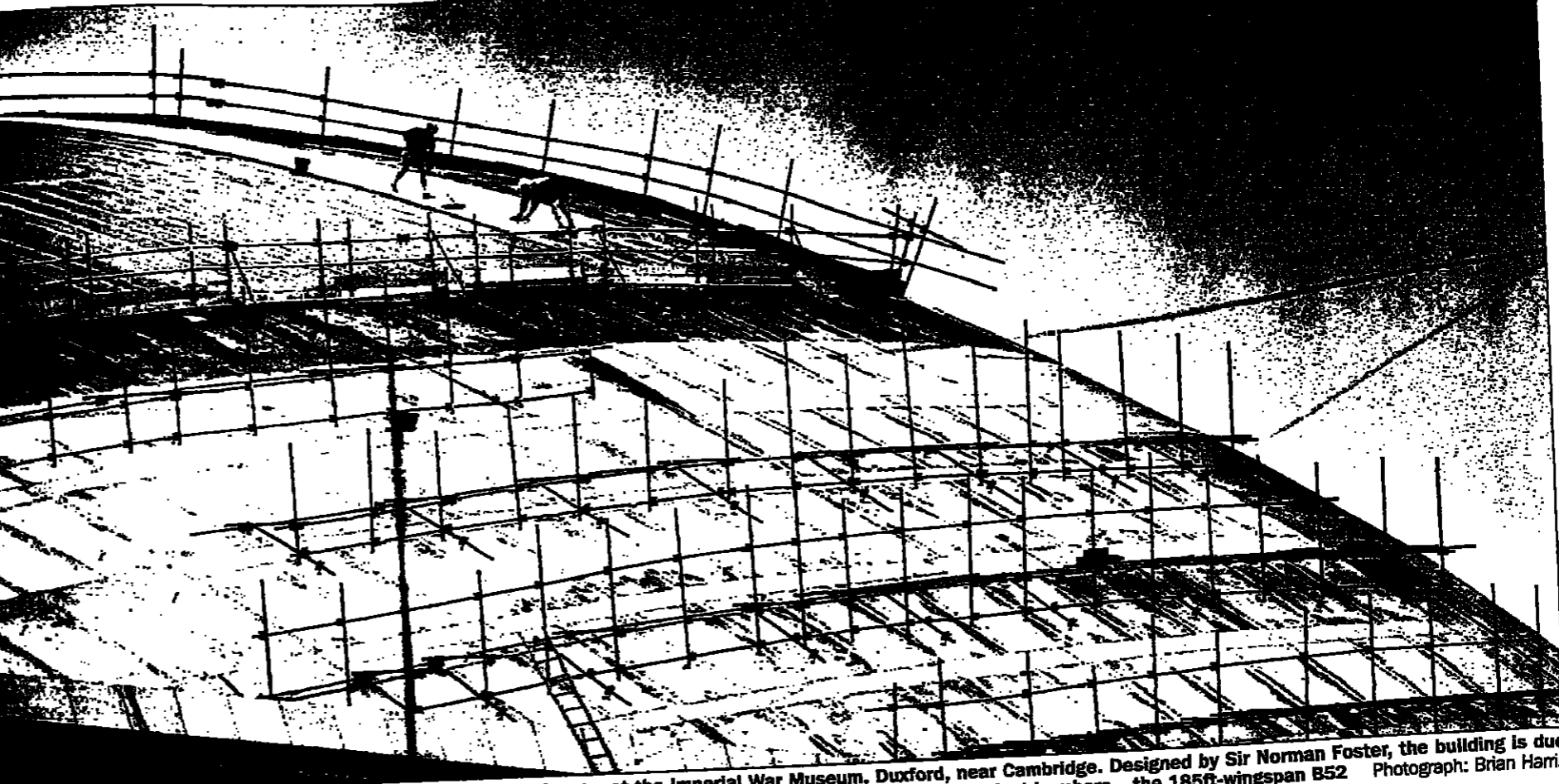
White supremacist groups, it says, are using American Internet sites to publish material which is illegal in many European countries.

It claims the greatest danger is posed by the World Wide Web, which is being used to disseminate ideas from American-based organisations such as The New Aryan Movement, Zionwatch, the National Party, and Independent White Racialists. Relying on credit card sales, groups are able to push propaganda through music, Resistance Records, for example, sells CDs with titles like *Aryan New Storm Rising*.

The sheer size of the Internet, and the availability of easy ways to encrypt or render messages anonymous, means that no law enforcement agencies in Britain or the US have seriously monitored the material. The German authorities, by contrast, are monitoring the Internet for counter-terrorist purposes. In 1993 and 1994 German and Norwegian neo-Nazi groups were co-ordinating their activities over the Internet, and the feeds within the British far-right were partially conducted on a Norwegian Bulletin Board system.

Much of the activity was legal in some countries. But the Institute claims it would be illegal to receive most of it in Britain, due to the Public Order Act, the Malicious Communications Act, and the Telecommunications Act of 1984.

The report says that though the technical and libertarian arguments against controlling undesirable material are compelling, schools, libraries, and other bodies, should voluntarily censor their material.



Sky high: Builders finishing the £11m United States Air Force hangar at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford, near Cambridge. Designed by Sir Norman Foster, the building is due for completion in mid-1997, and will hold all 19 of the museum's USAF aircraft, including one of the world's heaviest bombers - the 185ft-wingspan B52. Photograph: Brian Harris

## Elected mayors urged in councils' radical report

NICHOLAS TIMMINS  
Public Policy Editor

Britain moved closer yesterday to having directly elected mayors, with publication of a local-authority-backed study arguing for "radically new models" of local government.

"Current arrangements are not delivering what local government is going to need," argues Steve Bullock, joint author, a former leader of Lewisham.

Changes could range from directly elected mayors to a council-appointed Cabinet system. A new separation is needed between the political leadership

which runs the council and the elected assembly of other councillors, which can then hold a more visible and powerful leadership to account, the report argues - a model closer to the relationship of the Government with the House of Commons.

Such a change would make councillors more accountable for their actions.

The call for change comes as Tony Blair, the Labour leader, is expected to renew his commitment to experiments with elected mayors in a speech to local government on Tuesday.

Last week a House of Lords committee called for councils to be able to experiment with leadership and election procedures.

The present system produces decisions behind closed doors. The public often sees only a "stilted defence", and it is "extremely difficult" to judge whether a leader has delivered.

Councillors face unpaid workloads of 20 to 30 hours a week to maintain the "legal fiction" that they are all responsible, the report argues.

□ *Revitalising Local Democracy: The Leadership Options*, ADC, 26 Chapter Street SW1P 4ND

## Foreign posts to see huge cutback

COLIN BROWN

A warning to halt cuts in diplomatic posts abroad, designed to make savings for tax reductions, will be delivered to Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, in a hard-hitting report by a cross-party Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has told the committee, chaired by former minister David Howell, that an efficiency programme has identified potential annual savings rising to £28 million a year.

"The bulk of these savings have been required to enable the FCO to live within its previous baselines," the FCO said. "In 1996-97, the shortfall will be made up by a number of cuts to operating expenditure, including information programmes, travel and entertainment." No decisions have yet been taken on where expenditure reductions will fall in 1997-98.

Members of the committee were alarmed that the spending cuts on diplomatic posts abroad would be higher than previously stated. They were told that running costs were due to fall by £17 million in this financial year, and £11 million in 1997-98. But FCO officials said the cuts amounted to £34 million this year and £25 million next year when exchange rates and inflation overseas were taken into account.

The Treasury has also criticised the costs of overseas diplomatic posts, though these days the posts are often geared to exporting British goods.

Last week a leaked report showed that middle-ranking Treasury officials, dubbed "kids" by the Chancellor, were warning that by hitching up to European markets Britain could lose its chance to win lucrative trade with emerging economies in the Far East and South America. The select committee was appalled to find that dozens of posts in British embassies and consulates had been cut.

Since October 1993, the FCO has found efficiency savings of £22.4 million, representing nearly 11 per cent of corporate overheads and overseas support services. The number of staff slots in the UK has fallen by more than 18 per cent in the past three years. And the budget for the diplomatic wing of the FCO this year is due to fall from £1,431 million to £1,114 million - the lowest level since 1990-91. Some of the savings are being made by replacing UK staff in foreign posts with diplomats hired locally.

The Foreign Affairs Select Committee is also alarmed by the budget cuts proposed for the BBC World Service that are due to fall this year by £3 million to £170 million, and then by £9 million next year. It is carrying out a separate report on the BBC World Service.

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Sunday

28 July

# Newts on the crest of multi-million-pound new home



Taking nature in hand: Three of the 30,000 great crested newts being moved to "protected" ponds at Orton, Peterborough. Photograph: Brian Harris

A £3m operation to move 15,000 great crested newts out of the way of one of the biggest development projects in Europe is under way in a Cambridgeshire brick-field.

Every day this summer, in a vast clay pit next to the perpetually smoking brickworks at Orton, dozens of the small amphibians fall into pitfall traps. They are then moved a short distance to a site which will escape the bulldozers clearing the land for a £500m private-sector new town on the edge of Peterborough.

The land's owner, Hanson, is spending millions on the new town because it is anxious to remain within the law. The great crested newt is rare, in decline and protected by an Act of Parliament. And Hanson had the misfortune of finding what is probably Europe's single biggest colony of the newt inhabiting its development site.

As well as the rescue work, the multi-national company has had to sacrifice adjacent land worth, potentially, more than £10m to a dedicated 300-acre newt reserve. That brings the price tag for each creature saved up to £1,000.

The costly protection measures have been negotiated with English Nature, the Government's wildlife conservation watchdog. But the World Wide Fund for Nature regards the

## Hanson new town carries a hidden cost, reports Nicholas Schoon

agreement as a scandal and is looking to prosecute the Government for allowing development on the newt-inhabited land to go ahead.

The conservation group has already complained to the European Commission alleging that European Union nature protection laws are being breached. It wants Hanson to find somewhere else to build the one-fifth of its township destined for the newts' habitat, or to shrink the development.

Out of the question, says James Hopkins, Hanson's managing director for the township project. "You can't just suddenly plunk 1,100 homes somewhere else. We will have to rethink the whole master plan."

The clay pits still supply the Hanson-owned brick-making industry in Peterborough. Some have already been filled with coal ash from power stations. Those that remain are being drained and engineered to make them a secure foundation for the 5,200 homes, plus schools, shops, leisure-centre and offices which will make up the township.

Last week the newts were being removed by Hanson's wildlife consultants from where a large embankment will be built to define the edge of the reserve. A foot-high fence of slippery material is placed along the boundary of the trapping

area. When a newt encounters this it climbs over, falls, and then crawls along the bottom of the fence until it drops into one of numerous plastic bowls.

The old pits may look blighted and ripe for reuse, but they are a rich wildlife refuge amid the intensively farmed surrounding fenland. Waterfowl, birds of prey, rare dragonflies and hares also thrive in along with the newts boggy landscape among the thousands of conical, 20-ft hillocks made of clay and soil left over after the prime brick-making material was extracted.

Between the hillocks are the pools where the newts breed. No one appreciated how high their numbers were - around 30,000 - until development plans were well under way. Then English Nature declared the 400-acre area a site of special scientific interest. This was awkward, since SSSIs are designated to protect nature from damage and development.

But along with the designation came English Nature's deal with Hanson. In compensation for destroying the bulk of the SSSI, the company would create a permanent reserve for the amphibians.

This, say the two organisations, is a great gain for conservation, because the newts would be doomed if they were left alone. As time passes, the pits fill with water and small fish start to colonise the pools.

These then eat the newts' eggs. If the area were abandoned to nature, then within a hundred years the huge newt population would almost vanish.

## DAILY POEM

### Beach Roses

By Mark Doty

What are they, the white roses,  
when they are almost nothing,  
only a little denser than the fog,

shadow-centred petals blurring,  
towards the edges, into everything?

This morning one broken cloud  
built an archipelago,  
fourteen gleaming islands

hurrying across a blank plain of sheen:  
nothing, or next to nothing

- pure scattering, light on light,  
fleeing.

And now, a heap of roses  
beside the sea, white rugosa  
beside the foaming hem of shore:

waxen candles . . .

And we talk  
as if death were a line to be crossed.  
Look at them, the white roses.  
Tell me where they end.

Mark Doty's last collection of poetry, *My Alexandria*, won the 1995 TS Eliot Prize and the *Los Angeles Times* Book Award. He is the brightest lyric poet to emerge in the United States in recent years, and his graceful and apparently effortless use of language has at its heart a rare classicism and stillness. "Beach Roses" comes from his latest collection, *Atlantis*, published this month by Jonathan Cape at £7 and highly recommended.

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the leader page

# Danger: there's a risk of being consumed by it

The world's a scary place. Hardly a day passes without another strange or tragic story of sudden unexpected disaster sprawled across the newspapers. Hapless holiday-makers are bombed at an airport in Spain. Language students are killed when their plane to Paris explodes. Saturday-morning shoppers in Manchester are injured by an IRA bomb. A woman walking home one afternoon with her children in peaceful Kent is beaten to death. Ordinary people doing ordinary things are struck unexpectedly by danger and disaster.

These bolts from the blue are even more disturbing and disorienting when children are involved. It seems unimaginable that a child could be raped and murdered on her school exchange trip while sleeping in a room with other pupils. Or that a child asleep in a tent in her back garden could be stolen, abused, and killed in the middle of the night.

These events are deeply distressing, and we should be distressed by them. But most of us then go on to worry about the same things happening to us. Are we right? Should we move around in a state of subdued anxiety, a kind of alert fear against the risks that seem to crowd in on us? The real risks, after all, are low: we have about as much chance of being murdered within the week as we have of winning the lottery (ie, very little chance at all). Walking is more

dangerous than cycling, which is more dangerous than travelling by car, which is far more dangerous than flying.

Terrible and disturbing though the Dunblane tragedy was, children are still safer in the classroom than in their home. And they are less at risk from strangers than from parents.

The number of child murders has hardly changed in 20 years. Between 1983 and 1993, around 85 children were murdered each year; most of them infants killed at their parents' hands. In the entire decade between 1983 and 1993, only 57 children under 14 were murdered by people they didn't know. It is true that there is a much higher chance your child will be abducted today – but the kidnapper is likely to be your estranged husband or wife.

Such are the facts. But our fears do not reflect them. Parents who cheerfully trotted to school alone a generation ago now escort their own children every inch of the way. In 1971, 80 per cent of seven- and eight-year-olds were going to school alone; today fewer than 10 per cent do. Meanwhile, those few parents who let their kids walk home alone are roundly condemned by neighbours whizzing back in the (lethal) car.

The easiest explanation of this gap between the facts and our fears is the media. When the details of the deaths of Jade Matthews, Sophie Hook and Caroline Dickinson are plastered across the front pages or shouted from

the television news, it is hard not to be alarmed. There aren't many front-page headlines about how ordinary life is, and how many children arrived safely at school this morning. Nor are there many mentions in the national press about the countless children killed in road accidents.

But there's a curious puzzle here. Newspapers devote pages and pages to the impact and aftermath of IRA bombs. Yet people still shop in Manchester, still ride double-decker buses round London, and still (in our case) work in Docklands. We know more bombs may go off, but we rarely think

about it, and we certainly don't change our lives because of it. London parents don't plan to move to the country just to reduce the risk of their son or daughter being bombed.

Mad cows are another good example. The Government admitted that there might be a link between mad cows and CJD back in March. The newspapers and television news bulletins oozed with anxiety, and gave the issue at least as much coverage as any child murder. For a short time we did stop eating beef. But now, only four months later, beef sales have bounced back up again. We know no more now

than we did in March about the extent of the risks to our health, but it seems that most of us are prepared to shrug our shoulders.

The notice we take of the media when assessing the risks around us varies dramatically from one topic to another. With bombs and BSE, it appears that we would rather depend on our own experience than be swayed by news reporting. The idea that the department store we are about to walk into could explode around us is almost inconceivable. So is the notion that the tasty steak in front of us could turn our brains to jelly. But where children are concerned, it seems we can imagine the dangers only too well.

It could simply be that we react more passionately to any suggestion that our children are at risk. Threats we perceive to ourselves as healthy adults from bombs or cows are far easier to deal with and rationalise than threats to our trusting young sons and daughters. Present us with a story about a battered child and rationality deserts us.

Perhaps, too, we have become more sensitive generally to the potential damage to which children are exposed every day. Child abuse was never mentioned 20 years ago, so people didn't fear it. Silence on the subject, however, did not mean child abuse did not exist. Indeed, it was arguably more prevalent than it is today.

Even so, the lurking stranger terri-

fies us most. Bull-bars on jeeps, malign parents, other children at school: all these are benign compared with the unknown. Maybe it helps to remember, when the headlines are all turning bad, that motor cars kill more than madmen, and that bombs do far less damage than booze.

## A soupçon of sleaze in the soup

Dinner with the PM – £100,000; an evening with Ken Clarke or Gillian Shephard – around £10,000. Presumably other Tory MPs can be rented out, too, if the price is right. On the face of it, there is nothing wrong with this kind of political fund-raising – until it starts to corrupt the relationship between the party and its donors.

What favours can businessmen expect for their cash? "Entertainment," says one contact dinner organiser. What he means is, that's how you can describe the night out in the company accounts; as a description of a couple of hours with the PM it seems, at best, debatable. "Political intelligence," says another. That means the chance for some Major name-dropping – to be able to boast to contacts of your proximity to power.

As it happens, there is a better description. The word is "sleaze".

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Public still at risk in the BSE saga

Sir: It took the Department of Health seven years (1985-92) to tell the 2000 or so families that the human growth hormone (HGH) injections received by their children were contaminated by CJD ("The hidden harvest of death", 20 July).

The development of CJD (and the other spongy-brain diseases) depends not only on the dose of the virus, but also on the genotype – a rare one – of the individual and the probability is that most if not all of the hitherto unaffected "victims" of this disaster are genetically not susceptible to CJD. I therefore suggested in your columns (Letters, 19 August 1993) and in a letter to the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) that it would be a kindness to the suffering families to offer to establish the genotype of each potential "victim". Buried in the circumlocution of the CMO's dismissive answer to my letter is the immortal phrase "...the situation is being kept under review..." Four years on the families are still waiting for such an offer.

It was known to the neurological fraternity of the world by 1969 that CJD was an infection with this unique and sinister virus. Even if we allow a whole further year for this information to have percolated around the Medical Research Council and the Department of Health it takes us to, say, 1 July 1971. Why then was Mr Justice Morland so ungenerous as to pick on 1 July 1977 as the deadline for possible litigation?

Patricia Wynn Davies emphasises that this HGH catastrophe has nothing to do with BSE. But there is one sinister connection: negligence by the Ministry of Health in the HGH saga has caused members of the public to develop CJD and negligence of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food has put and is still putting members of the public at risk of developing CJD in the BSE saga.

H C GRANT  
London NW3

### Abortion: the right to choose

Sir: Further to the article "Abortion: why we must think again" (18 July), I would like to object to Bryan Appleyard's rather low opinion of human nature.

Pre-natal testing tends to take place late on in pregnancy, beyond the weeks when abortions are usually performed. Any foetus involved is therefore a wanted child. Many choose to have a test for disorders such as Down's Syndrome because they realise that, however much they want the child, the demands of a severely handicapped person are greater than they are able to meet.

You cannot equate such a test with testing for schizophrenia or heart disease, or other treatable conditions. I find it highly unlikely that, even if these tests were available, many would choose to use them, and equally unlikely that, if they were administered and the results were positive, abortion would be the preferred option.

For the overwhelming majority the "perfect" baby is not one with blond hair, blue eyes, a high IQ and a heterosexual disposition, as Bryan Appleyard implies, but a child to whom they are able to give the care and attention it needs.



Scientific research and development is of huge benefit to mankind. Let us not halt this development by our distrust of human ability to make sensible decisions when given the advantage of greater knowledge.

CLARE MURPHY  
Oxford

Sir: The bottom line with abortion is the right to have control over your own body and not to be forced to give birth against your will. What is needed is true publicly-funded abortion on demand.

In deploring the 98 per cent of abortions made for "social reasons", Bryan Appleyard's point. Many of these abortions are carried out because of the lack of financial and emotional support available for those trying to care for babies, both handicapped and able-bodied. If he was serious about decreasing the number of "unnecessary" abortions he would be better employed campaigning for crèche facilities, paid maternity leave and the like, rather than heaping more emotional torment on those who already have to make an impossibly difficult decision.

S M DAVIDS  
Leigh-on-Sea, Essex

### Give London a world-class Tube

Sir: Hamish McRae's article on reducing London's dependence on the Tube is seductive, but dangerous ("All change for our urban way of travel", 19 July).

I agree that there will be a revival of walking and cycling, and so we do need to change the way we use

road space to make that easier and safer and more enjoyable. We also need a big improvement in conditions for travel by bus. However, the danger is that developments of this kind are used as an excuse to avoid making investment in upgrading and improving the Tube and rail systems that serve London.

If London is to retain and enhance its position as a world-class city for residents, visitors and businesses alike, it must have a world-class transport system. An essential element is a short-term increase in funding for London Transport to catch up on the backlog of renewal needed to the existing system. With this, by early in the new millennium, there could be a reduction in public funding as operating profits increase.

Finally, London's international competitiveness depends greatly on its public services operating reliably and efficiently. We cannot afford to be on strike. The Tube and postal services may have a virtual monopoly in London, but London does not have a monopoly among world cities. Business will be lost if these disputes are not resolved now.

IRVING YASS  
Director of Transport  
London SW1

Sir: As ward councillor for Clerkenwell, I share Hamish McRae's satisfaction that the inner city population decline is being halted by warehouse or office conversions to "loft apartments". But this doesn't necessarily mean "no need for a Tube: you can walk

to work." One of the interesting phenomena of the future may be reverse commuting, with people preferring to live centrally because they enjoy the shopping and entertainment facilities and city buzz, but not tied to working there.

He also predicts a multi-centred region with strong "centres" on the fringe. If Croydon and Hammersmith become "new cultural magnets as well as office centres", it is entirely conceivable that my constituent who lives in the shadow of Smithfield market will travel to Hammersmith to the theatre.

I entirely accept that needless, polluting, energy-consuming and unpleasant travel should be curbed, but I am wary of the Green argument that all travel is inherently bad. Travel to expand horizons by seeing new things and meeting new people is a liberating thing to do. Personally, I love rocketing along in a fast Tube train. I even don't mind sometimes when it's crowded; it reminds me I'm in a real city. And, crucially, it keeps me out of a car. Hamish McRae risks giving comfort to the road lobby by his rejection of the "Victorian invention".

SARAH LUDFORD  
London N1

### Bosnia needs long-term help

Sir: Surely most commentators accept that neither the widespread return of refugees to Bosnia nor

significant economic regeneration in the country was a likelihood within one year of the peace deal signed in Dayton last November? While the international community may have subscribed to the rhetoric that a year was long enough to re-integrate the two entities of Bosnia, few people on the ground ever believed this to be realistic ("Refugees can never go home," says UN, 17 July; letter, 19 July).

Oxfam has worked in Bosnia since 1993 and witnesses daily the misery that stems from "ethnic cleansing". This, and our experience of over 50 years work throughout the world, has convinced us that an ethnically plural Bosnia remains the only genuine long-term solution for the region. For where have modern nation states defined by ethnic identity been viable? They tend to rely on forced mass migration, murder, or, at worst, genocide for their establishment, and the domination of remaining minorities to maintain them.

For the international community to recognise that it must engage with Bosnia for longer than one year is a step forward. However, losing sight of the vision of a single Bosnia must signify several steps back. The 1.8m people who have been displaced during the last four years have a right to return to their homes should they so wish. The challenge is how to create the conditions of physical and economic security which will allow people a genuine opportunity to exercise this right.

To date, international policy has been conducted with an eye on the US electoral timetable, or underpinned by the desire to shunt refugees from countries of asylum back to Bosnia. Until the international community starts behaving as if it has a long-term commitment to a single pluralistic Bosnia, "ethnic cleansing" will be endorsed and the people of Bosnia remain short-changed.

DAVID BRYER  
Director  
Oxfam UK & Ireland  
Oxford

### All writing must have narrative

Sir: You quote from Bill Buford's article in the New Yorker, in which he claims that "it is possible that narrative is as important to writing as the human body is to representation painting" ("Modern literary culture has lost the plot", 18 July). Surely this is not comparing like with like?

I would argue that narrative is to writing what composition is to painting. A painter may say that he is not interested in narrative – but composition and narrative are still the fundamental component of each medium. As a progression of information, a piece of fiction can have a bad narrative or a dull narrative – but it cannot have no narrative, any more than a painting on canvas can ever have no composition.

STEPHEN VOLK  
Bradford on Avon,  
Wiltshire

### The defrocking of Frolo

Sir: No one expects a film version of a famous novel to be true to its origins, much less do you expect it from a Disney animation, but I have noticed a very odd anachronism, occurring in the earlier film versions of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, and repeated in the Disney version.

In Victor Hugo's *Notre Dame*, the wicked Claude Frolo is a priest, the archdeacon of the Cathedral. When the Lionel Chaney and Claude Frolo Laughton film versions of the book were made there was, I believe, a set of strange rules in operation, one of which was that religious personages must not be shown in a bad light.

For this reason Frolo became a judge, which makes complete nonsense of the story, since in medieval times a layman would have no authority in the Cathedral.

A film made in 1957 with Tony Quinn gave Claude Frolo his correct profession, and also kept the novel's tragic ending, which the other films avoid. Strange that the animated version has followed the 1923 and 1939 film versions, rather than the 1957 one – or the book.

ELSTIE KARBACZ  
Colchester, Essex

### Rules of the road

Sir: I was intrigued by the view of Richard Mann regarding Tuscan cycling habits (Letters, 18 July). In my experience, Italian motorists have a similar talent for weaving around one another "with barely a cross word or an angry glance". Is he quite as willing to rejoice at four-wheeled road users "going about their business" with the same relaxed indifference to traffic rules? DAVID WILLIAMS  
London N8

# Romancing the past

Sixty years ago, thousands of men and women went to fight in the Spanish Civil War. Are there any ideals for which we would take up arms today? By Paul Vallely

**William Keegan**, 28, unemployed miner, a Communist, persuaded hundreds of people in his village of Baillieston outside Glasgow to part with their co-op divvy for the suffering workers in Spain. Killed in action at Brunete, Madrid.

**Felicia Browne**, 32, painter and sculptor, graduate of the Slade, first English person to fire a rifle at the fascist troops led by General Franco. Killed 23 days later rescuing a fellow fighter wounded on patrol.

**John Longstaff**, 17, marched from Stockton to London at the age of 15 to demand a job in 1934. One of the youngest Britons to volunteer to fight in Spain.

**Patience Edney**, nurse, from a staunchly Tory family, began to think seriously about poverty as a result of church discussion groups. Flew to Spain where she trained nurses tending the troops maimed by Franco's forces.

**Henry Burke**, 26, actor with the Royal Shakespeare Company and the left's Unity Theatre. One of the first to volunteer. Left for Spain the day after the historic Cable Street battle with Mosley's British fascists, the Blackshirts. Died at the Córdoza Front in 1937.

Sixty years ago next month the first volunteers left Britain to fight the fascist uprising against the democratically elected Spanish government. They joined 40,000 other anti-fascists from 50 countries in forming the International Brigade to combat the troops of General Franco who had rebelled against a reforming government which had begun to work on behalf of the poor. Some 2,400 left British shores, among them individuals from Australia, Cyprus, Hong Kong and Ireland. A large proportion - 526 men and women - never returned.

It was an extraordinary demonstration of idealistic commitment perhaps unparalleled in 20th-century history. They were intellectuals and poets shocked by the burning of books by the Nazis. They were ordinary working people committed through the socialist ideology of the labour movement to a notion of international solidarity. They were unemployed veterans of hunger marches, bitterly and deeply critical of the society that had marginalised them. They were Christians outraged by the unprecedented destruction by aerial bombardment of a civilian target, the



Myth and reality: a scene from Ken Loach's Spanish Civil War film 'Land and Freedom' (main picture); left: British members of the International Brigade bound for the front (photograph from 'Memorials of the Spanish Civil War', Alan Sutton Publishing)

town of Guernica. They were members of the Labour Party angered by the British government's policy of obstructing arms sales to one side. The odd few were adventurers who didn't get further than Paris on the free tickets provided. It was, as the poet Louis MacNeice put it, "a rag bag army".

But could it ever happen again? What, if anything, would promote members of our cynical and selfish society to respond today in such a way?

Certainly it is hard to predict contemporary Britain might find resonance in the idealistic language of the time. "No Spanish orphan dies who is not mine," was one of the slogans of the volunteers, "quiet men of peace, roused to war" who referred to themselves as "the conscience of Europe". They went knowing the odds, quoting the words of an earlier idealistic gallowglass, Lord Byron:

"They never fail, who die in a good cause." "The fascist bullet that gets me won't kill a Spanish worker," said one, Tommy Patten, as he left Co Mayo. In their ears rang the words of the fiery Communist orator, Dolores Ibarruri, La Pasionaria: "It is better to die on your feet than live on your knees." On their lips was the rallying call of their Spanish companions "¡No Pasarán!" - they shall not pass.

Could it happen again? "History doesn't repeat itself," says Bill Alexander, one of those who did return, now aged 86. "The character of modern warfare has changed. Then it was largely men with rifles and machine guns; today it's small number of highly-trained people handling extremely complicated weapons." Moreover, he admits, "if you live in a society where self-interest is always put first, as it has been in recent

years, that is bound to have had an effect on young people."

It is a view echoed by Paul Preston, professor of modern history at the London School of Economics and author of *The Spanish Civil War 1936-39*. "The international context is different. What was happening in Spain had massive international repercussions. Fascism was a European wide-movement. So was the front to oppose it. 'It's difficult to imagine anything that could today excite the imagination or provoke the fears it did. Moreover, the welfare state has undermined the power of the idea of solidarity in people's lives. In the 1930s solidarity was survival. The idea that 'in unity is strength' doesn't wash much in the 1990s after the revolution of individualism."

The shift which turned people from citizens into consumers began some time ago. Bill Alexander and his colleagues discussed the idea of a new International Brigade during the Vietnam war but already its time was past; and, in any case, "because of the climate and conditions Europeans would have been more of a hindrance than a help".

But others disagree. The filmmaker Ken Loach, whose *Land and Freedom* is a moving story of heroism and betrayal set in the Spanish Civil War, sees the same impulse at work in the thousands of volunteers who went out to pick coffee in Nicaragua in the 1980s. "They went out of a sim-

ilar sense of outrage," he says, "because the United States was committing the most appalling atrocities by proxy against a very poor, very small country which was doing no more than trying, in the best interests of its people, to lift itself out of the mess a dictator had left it in."

Picking coffee hardly compares with trench warfare. But Loach is unhappy with suggestions that the trips by members of Nicaraguan solidarity groups were little more than Club Red holidays for lefties. "They weren't asked to bear arms - Nicaragua had an army and it was fighting a guerrilla war which did not need large numbers of people as at the fronts in Spain," he argues. "But many of those who went to Nicaragua stayed in villages in the war zone and let it be known they were there. So if the Contras attacked they risked killing a foreign citizen. That was incredibly brave."

To those, like President Mugabe of Zimbabwe, who once suggested European Marxists working in his country should go home and start their revolution there, Loach responds: "The true revolutionary is an internationalist because revolution is indivisible. If it's not immediately on the cards in your own country you go wherever you can and do what you can."

But revolution is out of vogue nowadays. Loach knows that only too well: when he proposed a film about an industrial dispute to Channel 4 recently he was rebuffed with "strikes aren't sexy any more". Where

there is dissent it is unlikely to be focused on structures, parties and factions as it was in the Thirties. Today the nearest we come to that is a loose coalition of single-issue groups coming together over roads protests or animal rights.

"We live in a much more fragmented world," says Helen Graham, a historian at Royal Holloway College, author of *Socialism and War*. "The post-industrial, post-modern world needs no large cohesive labour structures because all the other old monolithic structures have gone too. There is once more an underclass but it is much more marginalised and its members are much more isolated. In Spain the rights and wrongs couldn't have been clearer; it was fairly emotionally simple even if it was intellectually complex. There were many fronts in Thirties Europe but only one war - against attempts by dominant élites to put the clock back and disenfranchise ordinary people."

The clarity of that was evident enough in the Thirties to another Scottish miner, Charles Goodfellow, who had served in the trenches of the First World War before going to Spain: "The years in the last war were nothing to this," he said, "but I know I am on the right side this time." But in contemporary history it is there only for the specialist. The former Labour leader and International Brigade supporter Michael Foot sees it today in the former Yugoslavia. "Attacks on Croatia and Bosnia bear a close

resemblance," he insists, as did the "non-intervention" policy which was once again a cloak for refusing to allow one side to arm itself. "The formation of organisations in Britain like the Bosnian Defence Committee paralleled that of the Aid to Spain movement."

But few British volunteers were evident in Bosnia, only the odd mercenary. There was a classic simplicity about Spain. A democratically elected government was overthrown by the army. The battle lines were clear. On one side stood the poor and against them were ranged fascism, big business, the landowners and the church. Bosnia, with its long history of internecine feuding, is altogether more complex.

"You can't say that because we didn't go to fight in Bosnia we are a cynical, dispirited and demoralised society," says Loach. "It's not as simple as that. There's no doubting that working people have become demoralised. Defeat breeds defeat. But people who have been clobbered don't necessarily give up, they regroup in different ways. There is a paradox: there is a sense of demoralisation but when the chips are down people will still say 'No More'. Recently 2,000 young people met in Berlin to support the rebel Mexican Zapatistas in Chiapas. That kind of thing gets no coverage in the press: it's always a counter-culture, but there's nothing to suggest that people aren't still outraged by injustice."

And yet something has changed. The historian AH Halsey, thinking of the Thirties, recalls a vivid contemporary sense of "the inevitable march of history towards the dream". Yet there were two dreams. Communists saw the dictatorship of the proletariat as an inevitability. But fascists thought the same thing too about their thousand-year reichs. The dynamic of those two competing certainties produced a climate today where the world has proclaimed the end of history and sees capitalism as the only inevitability.

There are those, like Loach,

who resist this. "That's the false consciousness we get all the time," he says impatiently. "It's what they want us to believe: that this is the inevitable state of things. But it's blatantly untrue. This sense of inevitability is entirely manipulated. A lot of people are working very hard to preserve global inequality. It's not inevitable; a lot of people are getting up very early every day to make it happen."

Michael Foot also cautions against fatalism. "I don't think international solidarity has disappeared altogether," he says, "there are a lot of people on the left who believe that the claims of international solidarity are still as great as they ever were." Not many, perhaps, but then there were not, relatively speaking, that many who went to fight in Spain. "A lot of people thought that those who went and fought in Spain were a strange bunch," Foot recalls. History has transformed them from that into heroic figures - a process, Loach warns against. Such myth-making only serves to disempower ordinary people in the present. "Part of the trick [by those who control the levers of power], he says, "is to romanticise the past so that the present can't compete."

There was certainly nothing romantic about the journey to Spain as Bill Alexander remembers it. "We didn't see it as helping someone else with their war. It was our war," he insists. Internationalism and solidarity were not empty rhetorical devices. The Germans and Italians in the International Brigade were exiles from fascism in their home countries. "In Britain we'd seen Mosley hoping to follow in the same path as Hitler and Mussolini, all of which deepened our concern and anger. The decision to volunteer didn't arise overnight. It was a process. As the poet C Day Lewis put it at the time: 'We went because our open eyes could see no other way.' I think that if young people today felt called to play their part on the side of humanity they would." It would seem churlish to contradict him.

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## Road rage: it's a virus and it's incurable

Roland Bumper is professor of automobile behaviour studies at Milton Keynes University. To put it another way, he doesn't know much about cars, but he knows a lot about motorists. To put it another way, whenever the media need an expert on road rage or traffic accidents, Roland Bumper is at the other end of a mobile phone. But recently he has been rather busy on research of his own...

"That's right," he told us down the line. "I have been doing some fairly painstaking research into the causes of road rage. Of course, I would much rather be out and about being interviewed about road rage in TV studios, but interest seems to have died down temporarily, so I have been using this enforced idleness to get on with some work. And it's been worth it because I think I have now located the road rage virus."

Heaven above, is road rage caused by a virus?

"I believe so. It is perhaps better named mad motorist's disease. In any case, we all

know it is irrational and unprofitable, so you can't seek a logical cause except in scientific terms. And I believe we have now isolated the road rage virus."

Does that mean it is curable? "Sadly, no. We think that the virus is passed on genetically, for a start."

Does that mean it is hereditary? "Yes, but we don't use that term any more. 'Passed on genetically' sounds much more up to date than 'hereditary'. But worse than that, we think the road rage virus, or RRV, has started to develop immunity to all drugs."

But how can it build up resistance to drugs when it hasn't been subjected to any? "Well, don't forget that any drugs that go into the body, for whatever purposes, do act on viruses whose existence we don't even know about."

So drugs we take to cure one condition may have an effect on another condition? "Surely, I have made a study of several athletes who have been taking drugs over the years, and they may not be any



Miles Kington

better athletes, but they sure are proof against influenza - but that's another story. What I want to say in this connection is that we now think the road rage virus or RRV has been mutating into different forms."

Oh my goodness me. You mean, producing new kinds of bad-tempered behaviour?

"Yes, indeed. We have so far identified nearly a dozen separate forms of rage which have evolved from road rage. There is lane lunacy, football fury, phone frenzy, airport apathy, cashier crisis, headline hysteria..."

Hold on, hold on there a moment. Let's look at one or two of those. What's headline hysteria?

"Headline hysteria is a condition we have identified which involves sudden rage sparked off by a news item on TV or radio, or even in the paper. It doesn't have to be good news or bad news, just on a certain topic. Michael Howard triggers it off. So does Northern Ireland. So does Princess Diana. So does sport, though mostly this affects women, not men."

Cashier crisis? Is that something that happens in banks? "Sometimes, though not invariably. A typical occurrence of cashier crisis comes when a position in bank or post office closes just as your place in the queue is getting nearer. Or when a cashier in a supermarket finds one item in your basket unpriced and rings a bell to send for a supervisor who never comes, and then she starts waving the detergent or whatever it is at the next-door cash till and shouting, 'Sheila, how much is the Worldcare Washing Up Liquid this week?' and you start seeing red..."

Hmm. Airport apathy? "Interesting one, this. Have

you noticed that when people are waiting in an airport departure lounge for a delayed flight, or just sitting in an aeroplane awaiting take-off clearance, they very seldom display rage, however annoyed they are?"

Well, isn't that because they know that rage will get them nowhere?

"Oh, no, logic has nothing to do with it. If logic was involved, nobody would get enraged at all. But in an airport we reckon it is a potent mix of rage and fear which produces this sullen apathy. Fear of flying, fear of accidents, fear that the pilot may crash the plane on purpose if you get cross with him..."

Hmm. And what about phone frenzy? "Oh, for heaven's sake work it out for yourself!" comes the furious answer. "I've got better things to do than feed information to lazy journalists who can't be bothered to do their own homework! Go and bother someone else! Goodbye!"

And the phone is angrily slammed down.

# I've seen the other side: and it stinks

The publication of 'Primary Colours', a thinly concealed novel about the Clintons and their presidential election campaign, caused a publishing sensation in the United States. It has sold well here, too, mainly because it is wittily and elegantly written, but partly because it was anonymous: everyone wanted to know who wrote it. Joe Klein, a 'Newsweek' columnist, was fingered several times as the author, but his denials were believed. Finally, last week, he was trapped by a 'Washington Post' handwriting expert, and admitted he was the author. In today's 'Newsweek' he writes ruefully for the first time about how and why he found himself in a hole, and kept digging. And explains how his own eyes have been opened by the experience ...



Here's what I thought was going to happen last January: 'Primary Colours', my anonymous novel, would be a modest success, a titillation for Beltway sorts and a few stray political junkies, but no big deal out in the rest of the country, where real people lead actual lives. I figured I would be a likely suspect, and would have to deny authorship. I figured no one would believe me. Friends, colleagues and pals would say, "Aw, c'mon Joe, it's you. No question. Don't hang noodles on our ears." And with that it would be over: mystery solved. The First Family probably wouldn't be happy about the book, but they're not often thrilled by what I write – and the portrait of Jack and Susan Stanton (Klein's fictional Clintons) seemed balanced to me. But something different happened. My friends believed my initial fits. I found this fairly unsettling, and a little frightening: what was I in for now? And then a lot of things began to happen very quickly. The book began to fly out of the stores. It became a Very Big Deal. And attention shifted to many other suspects. Henry Kissinger was mentioned. The book was No 1, and there was a movie deal ... and none of it was quite real, because I wasn't really experiencing it. I was out covering the Republican campaign, telling my little white lies all along, speculating with friends

about who might have done it, feeling uneasy. A week before the New Hampshire primary, the roof caved in. New York Magazine hired a professor from Vassar College, New York, with a computer program to analyse the styles of the various suspects. It was a pretty good program. But neither the professor nor the magazine called to ask my reaction until they'd already issued a press release. The things said about me in the release, and the accompanying article, were insulting, inaccurate and ridiculous. I was pretty angry about it, but ready to fold. Then I began to receive strong signals that Random House thought the author should remain anonymous. I had made a deal on that basis.

I also, by this time, truly wanted to remain anonymous. If I came forward now, my whole life would be different: the celebrity, the impact on my family, the fact that I'd not just be a 'Newsweek' columnist any more, I'd be that "Anonymous" guy. As James Carville has said, "When you become famous, being famous becomes your profession." I didn't want that. Oh, by the way, all this was taking place in the course of two hours. I felt trapped, stunned. I must have changed my mind a dozen times. But I eventually came out in favour of keeping my commitment to the publisher and my book.

The worst consequences stem from my adamant denials of authorship (I thought nothing less than adamant was going to suffice). Two were especially hard: on camera to my other employer, CBS (and worse, privately, to my friend Dan Rather) – and to David Von Drehle of the Washington Post, who asked

if I'd stake my journalistic credibility on it. I should never have said yes. I didn't think my journalistic credibility was at stake; my commitment as a novelist was. I should have said something clever – diverting.

The last few months have been pretty awful, but, given the book's success, it would be fatuous to complain. Still, I was almost relieved when the Washington Post found an early manuscript with my handwriting on it.

The relief was fleeting. The ensuing maelstrom was unbelievable. Not only the zoological press conference – that was to be expected. But also the endless chattering and bantering and pontificating on the air about what I did.

I couldn't sleep. I couldn't eat. I kept drinking water, but felt dehydrated. It was, I realised, a pretty typical campaign day for Bill Clinton or Bob Dole.

Could I have handled this mind-boggling situation better? Sure. I've said some things I'll probably always regret. I've also learnt this: what it's like to live as a politician. I did it for a few hours after the New York Magazine story appeared. I did it for a few days last week. And it is impossible. It is impossible to think straight. It is very easy to screw up, and it is unrelenting. But they do it every day, and that is no way for a civilised nation to choose its leaders. Of course, this was one of the themes of Primary Colours – but I was just imagining what it was like on the other side of the press conference. Now that I've lived it, I hope I'll show a little more mercy for the brave, frail fools and heroes who live our public lives. I hope you will, too.

## Chopsticks are out against the Big Mac

Paul Valley on Chinese efforts to curb obesity

It was the original fast food – in China at any rate – but the traditional air-fry is giving way to something altogether less healthy. The world's most populous nation is starting to grow fat on a diet of cheeseburgers and doughnuts. Government officials in Peking are not amused.

Chinese authorities at the weekend launched a campaign to get their people to revert to Chinese food when in search of a fast fill. An increase in levels of obesity – as much as 10 per cent of the population of Shanghai is now overweight – has led Communist Party officials to pledge that comparable standards of speed and hygiene would be introduced into indigenous catering outlets in an attempt to fight off the foreign invader.

How wise they are. Consumer goods are the vanguard of the forces of capitalism. Fast food outlets are its shock troops. And it is the burger which is the standard-bearer of Western economic hegemony.

McDonald's bore the colours through the collapsing Berlin Wall. Early Western tourists into Budapest reported that already queues were a quarter of a mile long outside McDonald's there (and at Adidas, too). And even before a collapsing Soviet Union withdrew the subsidy from the Cuban economy I met young malcontents in Havana who swore that they would happily give up their nonpareil of a health and education system in return for the consumerist nirvana of the Sony Walkman, Michael Jackson T-shirt and an endless supply of quarter-pounders.

Now already it seems in the case of China the new markets are succumbing to our old diseases. Good revolutionary ailments like stomach cancer they fear could be ousted by the corollaries of economic imperialism. (Thanks to their diet almost 40 per cent of Americans are now obese; it was only 25 per cent in 1981 – extrapolating from which scientists say it will be 75 per cent by 2050 and, one epidemiological wag predicts, by 2250 every American will be obese.)

Meanwhile, the inexorable conquest of the world by the Big Mac continues. Last week McDonald's Corp reported an 11 per cent rise in earnings and said it expects to post record results this year. It earned \$420.4m from its 19,000 restaurants worldwide and another 2,500 outlets are to open this year – a new one every three hours.

No one, it must seem to the Peking authorities, is immune from the virus. Yesterday news came that even their brawniest and best have submitted. Chinese women gymnasts are bypassing the salad bar in the Olympic Village dining tent and heading for the golden arches at the back and loading up with french fries and hamburgers. McDonald's, it transpires, is an official sponsor of the Games. No wonder the chopsticks are out back home.

## Mourners at the grave of trade unionism

Universal rights hold the key to workers' protection, not outdated union wrangling

Yesterday was trade unionism's grand heritage day. It was the yearly rally held to commemorate the martyrs of Tolpuddle – the Dorset village from which six farmworkers were transported in 1834 for the sin of forming a union to protect themselves against rapacious farmers. So the brass bands marched in their honour, brotherly banners proudly unfurled.



POLLY TOYNBEE

But how many hearts' cockles does all that stuff warm these days? Not many. Most of Britain's young have no experience of trade unions. The whizz-kids of new industries or the Have-A-Nice-Day workers of the service sector do not even know what a shop steward is. We who are older, however, remember, and the memory is not fond. A blend of Tory propaganda and union reality conjures up a discontented winter when bodies went unburied while the rest of us were buried under mouldering black sacks of uncollected rubbish.

My own personal brushes with trade unionism left a sour taste. The National Union of Journalists, its commitment to freedom and civil liberty demonstrated by sending a letter of support to Colonel Gaddafi, once arraigned me. The charge sheet read: she continued to handle her husband's copy after he crossed some picket lines. Since I worked in a closed shop newspaper, I stood to lose my job if the union threw me out. In the end they fined me £1,000 and on appeal reduced it to a reprimand.

But in the 10 years since, how have the mighty unions been brought low. Union membership has plummeted.

Those automatic seats for union leaders on quangos have gone. In my own workplace, like so many others, the management refuses to recognise the union at all. Does that make me pleased? No. We have exchanged one tyranny for another. I, along with most others, according to opinion polls, feel deeply uneasy about our status as the country with the fewest employment rights in Europe.

Privately, union leaders also despair, with apocalyptic talk of terminal crisis. The Labour Party may have recovered its political fortunes, but there has been no parallel renaissance of trade unionism. On the contrary, they remain frozen out in the cold.

So where now? For my Tolpuddle anniversary I visited Jack Dromey, National Secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union. In his office, visitors are offered earl grey – new trade unionism, new tea. If anyone can speak for the unions' future role it must be him (he is married to Harriet Harman, front bench health shadow). He is the belmsman of union modernisation, a lonely post almost alone out there with his souwester turned into the storm-forces of

entrenched reaction. He, therefore, is able to decode Blair's calculated statement of support for London Underground's blundering management.

It was a warning shot – to the unions. Pay freezes in the public sector have created a volcano of demand which may erupt on the morrow of a Labour victory. So Blair, Brown and others are making it very clear that the first union to try their nerve can expect a bloody nose. No union tanks on Blair's prime ministerial lawn.

So, can the unions renew themselves? Dromey's assessment is withering. Warring old barons predominate, fighting one another over the bones of dwindling membership, dog chewing on dog – the chaotic teachers' unions being the paradigm case.

Everything is against renewal: the decline of unions' power base in heavy industry, the rise of service industries which are notoriously hard to organise, the spirit of individualism and loss of old ideological certainties. The Thatcher reforms have left the unions crippled, although those who travel on London Underground or use the Royal Mail have felt a sharpish kick from their callipers.

Jack Dromey, however, has faith. He has a vision, optimistic maybe, but not unpersuasive. It is of unions as "the firm and effective friend of the citizen at work". Not bad. A very large number of downsized, insecure, bullied, over-worked and intimidated employees, both the high and low paid, are in need of one of those friends.

But can unions as we know them change enough – and in time? Yes – progressive trade unionists of the Jack Dromey stamp could still influence the culture of management-worker relations. His formula sounds impressively realistic and moderate. "We have to say to our members that they are not going to achieve their dreams of higher pay and status except with more productivity and ending absurd demarcations."

He cites some good examples: at Ford a new deal included training courses in every and any subject for the whole workforce, to improve their skills, to upgrade themselves for promotion or simply for personal fulfillment. Seventy per cent of the workforce at Dagenham stay after shift now and attend courses. Staff turnover has dropped sharply. And a

new local government deal is about to be struck for 1.5 million workers, tearing down all the old demarcations, offering new flexibility to both employers and workers in exchange for vocational and self-development courses to let people escape dead-end ghetto jobs. The idea is to pursue the long-term interests of employees, not just a year-on-year pay deal.

Those are examples of what forward-looking trade unionism can achieve – but only in the few traditional unionised workplaces. What of the great non-unionised majority? The only hope of better employment protection comes not from trade unions at all but from new universal rights for employees. A fair balance of power in most workplaces depends less on Jack Dromey or his unions – however progressive – but on Labour's promises on the European social chapter and a minimum wage.

The only chance for trade unionism is for workers to see the new briefcase-carrying breed of Dromeys as a professional friend, financial adviser, carrier of a portfolio of opportunities and advice services – a far cry from the factory gate soapboxes of yesteryear.



Tolpuddle, Dorset: the annual rally to commemorate the six 'martyrs' of 1834. But does this have any relevance today? Photograph: Edward Webb

## Why I am ashamed to be British

Over several recent issues this country has shown itself to be cowardly, ignorant and duplicitous

I have recently begun to feel ashamed of my country. I cannot recall experiencing such an emotion before. For most people, I assume, that is a pretty rare feeling. If it ever happens at all.

It occurs when other nations or peoples have good cause to rebuke us. When General Dyer opened fire in April 1919 on an unarmed crowd in Amritsar in India and killed 379 of them, many British people were ashamed. AJP Taylor said it was the decisive moment when Indians were alienated from British rule. On the other hand, Neville Chamberlain's agreement with Hitler at Munich in 1938, which sanctioned German occupation of part of Czechoslovakia, was welcomed by the entire British press except one left-wing Sunday paper and the Communist Daily Worker. Feelings of revulsion came later.

So we come to the past three months, a period in which the United Kingdom has shown itself on different occasions to be cowardly, ignorant and duplicitous. It is these incidents coming together which have made me feel defensive when meeting people from neighbouring countries.

The charge of cowardice was implicit in the criticisms made on BBC television 10 days ago by the Irish Prime Minister, John Bruton. He was commenting on the decision made by the British authorities suddenly to allow Orangemen to parade through the Catholic section of the Garvaghy Road in Portadown, Co Armagh. I found myself listening to the government of my country being told by another prime minister how, in a democracy, the rule of law must be defended. I could only agree.

Examine the excuse offered by the Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, Sir Hugh Annesley: "I had to look at the implications if there was a determined thrust on the police lines. It could have led accidentally or otherwise to loss of life. I was not prepared to risk the loss of a single life for the sake of rerouting that march." Sir Hugh did not sufficiently consider the loss of life that was likely to follow from his decision to give in to pressure. I cannot help thinking, too, that if our fire services were to operate on Sir Hugh's principle, fewer people would be rescued from burning buildings. Sir Hugh put up the white flag. It is as simple as that.



ANDREAS WHITTAM SMITH

Then there was the vicious blackguarding of foreigners during the recent Euro 96 football championship. At a time when there were many Ger-

You can say all is fair in love, war and business ... I say it was a vile trade

man visitors here we called them Krauts, we declared football war on them, we constantly referred to their Nazi past and our tabloid newspapers said that we were going to bomb them to bits. We would "Blitz Fritz". If you ask the editors why this hap-

pened, they say it was just a joke, part of our national character to poke fun at foreigners, quite harmless, amusing really, can't you see?

This attitude springs from an invincible ignorance. British is best, because we know no other and because we are unreflective and unquestioning about what we have. Can there now be a Briton who will not feel at least a bit awkward when he or she next encounters somebody from Germany?

Duplicity is the most appropriate description of an incident that punctuated the BSE crisis. We learnt that British beef-rendering companies had knowingly sold contaminated products to France, Germany, Spain and other countries such as Israel. They stepped up their exports immediately after the British government had banned the sale of meat made from cow and sheep for use in cattle feed in the United Kingdom. The rendering companies noticed a loophole in the regulations and took full advantage. Thus in 1989, when already proscribed in this country, British sales overseas of the very meat and bone meal thought to have been the original source of the BSE epidemic actually doubled.

The UK Renderers' Association said that its members "might have" exposed other countries to such feed but that "they have applied whatever legislative controls the government introduced". Our foreign customers were outraged. What could one reply to their criticisms? You can say that all is fair in love and war and in business too; that these were transactions between professionals where the rule of caveat emptor applies; that foreigners would have done it to us. Perhaps. I say it was a vile trade.

These incidents pile up in the final months of a fourth successive Tory government. The Scott report showed that a culture of encouraging British companies to exploit loopholes in trade regulations was sanctioned by our politicians. The same government has just been engaged in its own widely trumpeted "war" on Europe. Thus the Daily Mirror's football parody of Chamberlain's declaration of war had a more recent precedent than 1939. As for Sir Hugh Annesley's white flag, the possibility exists that it was hoisted to please his political masters. Come to think of it, perhaps it is my government I should be ashamed of rather than my country.

Her fourth birthday may well be her last, but she isn't ill



She's poor

In countries like the Gambia, one in four children die before their fifth birthday. The diseases they suffer from differ. But the cause is almost always the same.

Poverty ACTIONAID is working in some of the poorest areas of the world to end this cycle of despair. Helping local communities to provide clean water, education, health, nutrition, food production and a means to generate their own income.

Sponsor a child like Nyara and you'll be helping her family and her whole community. A photograph and regular reports keep you in touch. You will receive messages from the child and can write if you wish.

By becoming a sponsor you'll make all the difference to the life of a child like Nyara.

Please sponsor a child today.

Please send no further details about sponsoring a child, or call 0450 019773

Where does Nyara live? Africa Asia Europe Latin America Middle East North America Oceania South America

What does Nyara do? Actor Artist Athlete Crafts Designer Dancer Doctor Engineer Musician Performer Scientist Teacher Writer

How much do you want to pay? £10 £20 £30 £40 £50 £60 £70 £80 £90 £100

Name Surname Forename Address Postcode City Country

Phone ( ) Fax ( ) E-mail

ACTIONAID



# Why one-time bellwether ICI has become a bit of an old plodder

Imperial Chemical Industries is not the power it was. At one time it was regarded as the bellwether of British industry and its profits were an important event in the City calendar.

Times change. Even before ICI bowed to Lord Hanson's own brand of persuasiveness and demerged its drugs side it had slipped from its pedestal. The likes of the General Electric Co were seen as more representative of industry and ICI lost some of its corporate fascination.

Its shares have tended to reflect its changed status. And, as expected, they have been overshadowed by Zeneca, its drugs offshoot.

As Zeneca has enjoyed the stock market's addition to drugs - and experienced pulsing rounds of takeover speculation - its shares have plodded along and rest wearily much closer to their 12-month low than high.

Zeneca was floated off on a one-for-one share basis, ignoring the drug side's cash call at the time of the break-up, its shares are nearly twice the value of ICI. On demerger day three years ago Zeneca was 632p; ICI 608p. The price before the split was 1,244p.

There is not much chance of an upward re-rating on Thursday when ICI produces interim figures. They will be poor.

Two decades ago such a setback would have been taken badly. This time it should not create more than a few ripples so long as ICI keeps the fall within market expectations. NatWest Securities is looking for a 198m in the second quarter which will leave six-month profits at around £400m, a 22 per cent fall.

The group has already warned of a decline. "With certain important product markets showing a greater than initially expected price and volume weakness, the downturn will in-

evitably be starker than management had first anticipated," says analyst Lucas Herrmann at NatWest.

Profits for the full year are estimated at £830m (against £951m). For next, a recovery to £1,050m has been pencilled in. Thorn EMI is likely to suffer a similar fate when it demerger next month. Once again the idea is to allow the glamorous side of the business - music - to stand alone, free from the encumbrance of a rather staid rentals division.

There has been continuing speculation an overseas bidder will barge into the comfy divorce proceedings. But it now looks as though the split will not suffer outside interference and the rumoured predators seeking the showbiz operation are content to wait until the divorce is absolute.

The group is due to produce quarterly figures today although with the break-up so close they are likely to be

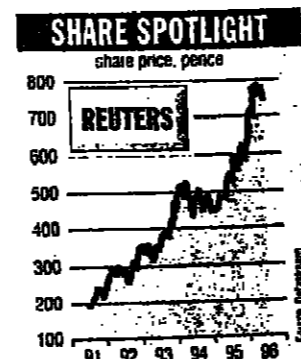


## STOCK MARKET WEEK

### DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

something of a sideshow. The banking profit season starts on Friday. Lloyds has for years had the distinction of kicking off and even with TSB in tow it



retains its frontal role. The season is likely to produce another bankers' profits feast with Lloyds TSB offering £1.15m against £1.01bn.

Many banking forecasts have been upgraded ahead of the results season. Salomon Brothers looks for figures "on the high side of consensus expectations".

SmithKline Beecham, the drugs giant, has quarterly figures due tomorrow; around £325m against £298m is the popular guess. On Wednesday Lloyds Abbey Life, controlled by Lloyds TSB, should produce interim of £215m (£197.1m). Reuters, the information group, contributes to the profits round with year's results.

Around £330m against £288m is on the cards.

BT, originally expected last week, is another big gun firing. It, too, has quarterly figures on Thursday and, rather like ICI, is likely to suffer the indignity of a profit fall. The market is looking for a three month outturn of about £850m against £874m.

Last week, with few major results to occupy them, shares spent the first three days sinking and the last two making up some of the lost ground.

New York provoked turmoil, which encouraged crazy talk of another crash, reminding a few old-stagers of advice from a former Stock Exchange chairman, Lord Ritchie.

After a particularly crunching session, when the FT 30 index, the market measurement at the time, had fallen 30 points and there was emotional talk of looming stock market disaster, he was asked what the small investors should do.

"Put your head down and let it all wash over you," he replied. Any private investor who followed such advice last week would have emerged with his portfolio not too badly bruised.

There was without doubt deep concern among some small investors, with unit trusts withdrawing prompting some fund managers to seek to un-

load stock. Footsie ended 17.8 points down and even the supporting 250 index, hit harder than the blue chip index, looked more confident. But the market remains fragile. Low summer share trading means it is at the mercy of the swings and roundabouts of the futures market as well as icy overseas blasts.

New York is no longer the influence it used to be. Even so, when the world's biggest market sneezes London (and the rest) shiver. Alan Greenspan's hint that US interest rates are unlikely to go up in the near

term should be reinforced tomorrow when he addresses the Senate. So there could - just possibly - be more freedom for domestic rates. This week's home-produced statistics include retail sales for June and the preliminary GDP estimate.

They could influence the Chancellor's thinking when he has his monthly chin-wag with the Governor of the Bank of England next week.

There is no doubt the Chancellor still yearns for lower rates and another cut is a distinct possibility. Germany may be obliged to reduce its rates, so even the eventual but seemingly inevitable US increase could be accommodated.

Cheaper money would help the market achieve some of the more optimistic forecasts. However there are signs of expectations being reduced. Société Générale Strauss Turnbulb has lowered its year-end Footsie estimate to 3,850 points against 3,900-4,100.

**Share Price Data**  
Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, rounded to one decimal place.  
Other details: 1 Ex rights 2 Ex-dividend 3 Ex rights & ex-dividend 4 Ex rights & ex-dividend & 5 United Securities Market's Suspended  
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Source: FT Information

## The Independent Index

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FTSE 100 - Real-time	00	Starting Rates	04	Privatisation Issues	38
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UK Company News	02	High Street Banks	06	Subordinated	40
Foreign Exchange	03	Day Report	21	Discount	41

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## Interest Rates

	UK	Germany	France	US	Japan
Bank of England	5.75%	2.50%	2.50%	5.25%	5.00%
Discount	5.75%	2.50%	2.50%	5.25%	5.00%
Prime	5.75%	2.50%	2.50%	5.25%	5.00%
3-month	5.75%	2.50%	2.50%	5.25%	5.00%
6-month	5.75%	2.50%	2.50%	5.25%	5.00%
12-month	5.75%	2.50%	2.50%	5.25%	5.00%

Unit	Share	Weekly	Index	Unit	Share	Weekly	Index
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## Government Securities

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DEPUTY CITY & BUSINESS EDITOR: MICHAEL HARRISON

# BSkyB in talks with OFT on cable programming deal

**MATHEW HORSMAN**  
Media Editor

BSkyB, the satellite broadcaster, is locked in late-stage negotiations with the Office of Fair Trading over the terms of its supply of pay-television programming to the cable industry. The talks, aimed at avoiding a monopoly reference, follow a six-month inquiry by the OFT into BSkyB's dominant position in the subscription television

market, and could lead to formal undertakings on the terms and conditions of its trading relationship with cable operators. BSkyB, owned 40 per cent by Rupert Murdoch, is also under scrutiny from the European Commission, which warned in a letter sent late last month that its special contracts with two leading cable operators, Telewest Communications and Nynex CableComms, contra-

vened EC competition law. The contracts, which have already been the subject of negotiations with the OFT, give the two cable operators long-term guaranteed supply of BSkyB programming. In return, they originally agreed not to compete with BSkyB in the market for pay-per-view film and sport programming, in effect ending efforts by cable companies to launch new services. These

clauses were deemed anti-competitive by the OFT, but modifications have yet to be agreed. In its formal letter, edited copies of which have been circulated to cable operators, Brussels has asked BSkyB to confirm it intends to modify the contracts. It is also understood that John Bridgeman, the director-general of the OFT, has asked the Restrictive Practices Court to accelerate its investigation

into BSkyB's contracts with the Premier League, which give the broadcaster exclusive rights to live matches. The developments are likely to deepen market concerns about the regulatory risks facing BSkyB, the UK's most profitable broadcaster. Analysis said late last week, however, that minimum undertakings agreed with the OFT would not necessarily weaken BSkyB's competitive position.

The six-month OFT inquiry, completed within the past few weeks, led regulators to open direct talks with BSkyB, asking the company to consider undertakings on its "bundling" of channels for sale to cable and on the way the programming is priced. It is understood that the Independent Television Commission, the television watchdog, has also been told of the OFT's initial findings and its suggested remedies.

If the talks fail, the OFT is almost certain to advise the Department of Trade and Industry to refer the matter to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. Media analysts said over the weekend that an MMC reference could suit BSkyB, because of the length of time it would take to complete. The company is working on plans to introduce digital satellite, perhaps by the end of 1997, and expects even-

tually to phase out its existing analogue pay service. The OFT inquiry followed months of complaints from several cable operators, which argued that they could not package their programming in response to market conditions because of Sky's terms of supply. The key areas of dispute have been bundling - by which operators are obliged to take a range of Sky channels to receive the best discount - and price.

**Three cheers: Reprieve for tied-house system eases fears of chaos that followed Beer Orders**

## Brewers poised to win EU stay of execution

**JOHN SHEPHERD**  
Business News Editor

Britain's tied-house system operated by the brewers is poised to win a two-year stay of execution from the European Union. The EU's decision will relieve fears that it would severely curtail, and perhaps even dismantle, the 160-year-old system that has enabled the brewers to have complete control over the beers that their pubs can sell.

The industry has barely recovered from the huge and controversial upheaval caused by the 1989 Beer Orders that forced the top-flight brewers to sell more than 11,000 pubs. Any similar directive handed down by Brussels now would, in the eyes of many analysts, have caused unnecessary disruption and damage to an industry recovering from the recession but still struggling against the tide of bootlegged booze from across the Channel.

Karel van Miert, the EU

Competition Commissioner, is understood to be close to finalising plans that will defer the review due next year of the industry's exemption from anti-competitive laws under Article 85 of the Treaty of Rome. According to a Brussels source, the EU, which has yet to publish its long-awaited green paper on all tied manufacturing and retail operations from petrol to bread, will retain the status quo for Britain's brewers until 1999.

The reprieve, which sources said could be announced very soon, would follow extensive lobbying by MPs, Euro MPs, and the brewers, headed by Bass, Whitbread, Allied Domecq and Scottish & Newcastle, the industry number one. Late last month, Mr Van Miert made a flying visit to Britain to address the North West Brewers and Licensed Retailers Association at a meeting hosted by Gary Tiley, Euro MP for Bolton.

At the meeting, which was also attended by David Kay of

Thwaites brewery and held at the Jolly Carter pub in Bolton, run by Rees Gibbon, Mr Van Miert signalled his intentions about the industry by saying that he was considering modifying the system rather than instigating a thorough shake-up. That was particularly welcome news for small brewers, which feared collapse if they were forced to part company with their pubs.

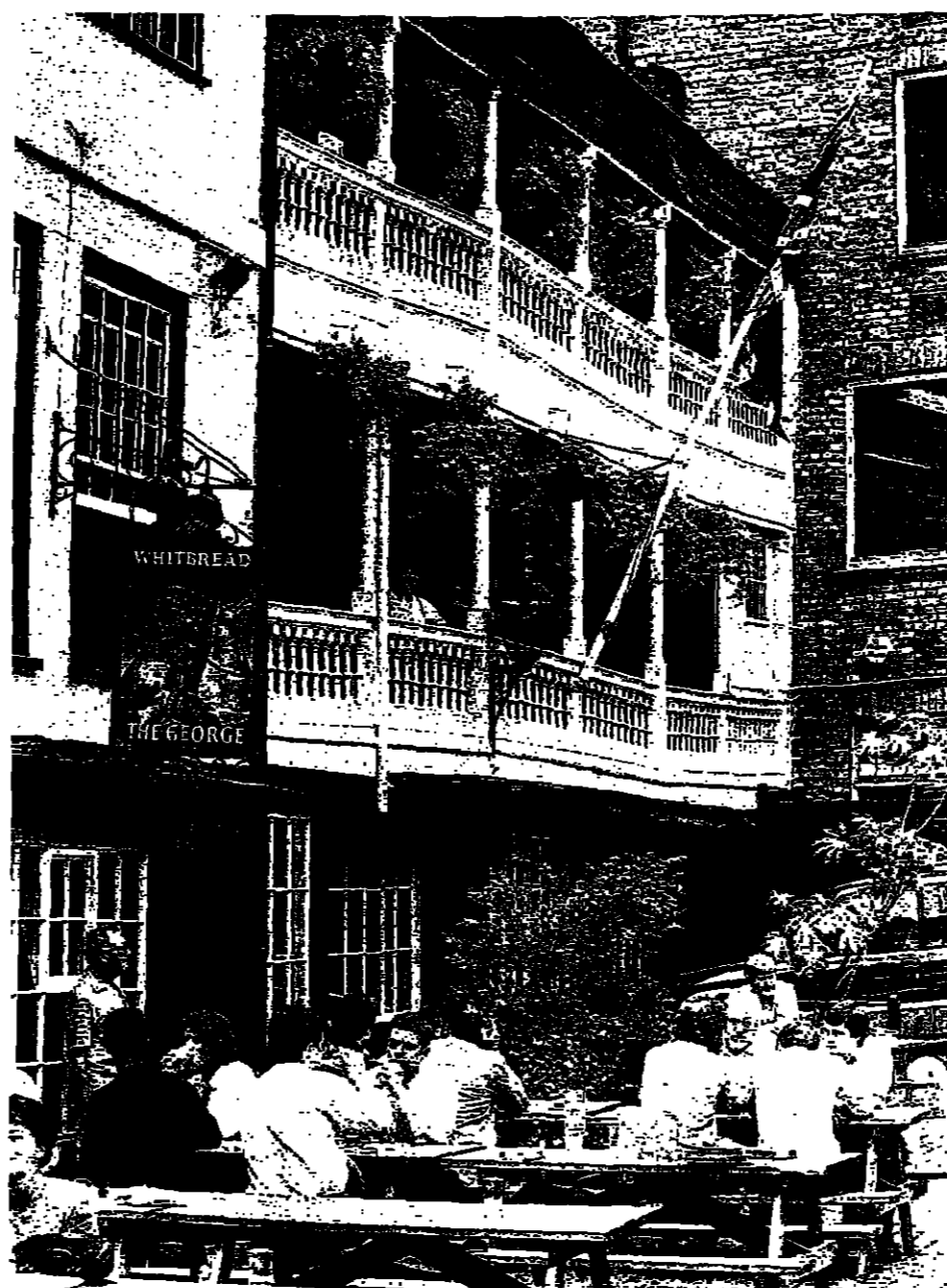
Questioned about the "modifications", an industry source said yesterday that Mr Van Miert might introduce an appeals system for landlords to challenge their beer tie with brewers.

An appeal, the source said, would have to demonstrate that the tie restricted trade, and was anti-competitive in nature.

Such a system would be welcome for the hundreds of publicans of the Independent Pub Company, which is jointly owned by Grand Metropolitan and Fosters of Australia. Many of them have challenged - both through UK courts and the EU - the terms of 20-year Independent leases that require them to buy beer from Courage - now owned by S&N - at full list prices despite a price war between the top brewers.

Free houses are still able to obtain big discounts of up to £70 a 36-gallon barrel of beer, and the same is true for the new pub companies that were formed in the wake of the forced sale of 11,000 pubs between 1989 and 1992.

Many of the pub groups, from Greenalls which aban-



**Cheered: Brewers have welcomed the extra time for pubs** Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

doned brewing in the late 1980s to fledgling companies like Century Inns, have used purchasing muscle to extract financially favourable beer supply agreements from brewers for up to seven-year terms. It is understood that Mr Van Miert has recognised that the tied-house system's dominance

of the beer market is not as strong as it used to be and continues to decline. Fresh research by analysts at SBC Warburg shows that the market control exerted by the brewers in the few years since the Beer Orders took effect has weakened considerably. SBC Warburg says that in

1989 some 52 per cent of the on-trade outlets were tied, and accounted for 43 per cent of total beer consumption.

It now estimates that only 38 per cent of on-trade outlets are tied and account for only 27 per cent of beer sales, and predicts by 2000 that the respective figures will be 30 and 20 per cent.

## HMSO bidders likely to halve value of sale

**NIC CIGUTTI**

The planned sell-off of HMSO, the Government's publishing and stationery arm, expected to be announced this week, could be thrown into jeopardy at the last minute by bidders determined to renegotiate their offers for the business.

Each of the three remaining bidders is understood to want to discuss a number of issues with the Government. The final price is likely to be less than half the £100m the Government originally hoped to raise from the sale.

One key unresolved issue is whether the financial information made available to bidders will justify the offers made for the business once a closer investigation is carried out.

"There are some people who may say that everything is rosy in the garden in order to persuade the vendor that they are very positive about running the business," a source said. "But there are still many points that are unresolved."

The three potential buyers left in the race to buy the publisher of official documents are Westminster Information Systems, backed by NatWest Ventures and Rank Xerox, Fleming Electra and a consortium including 3i, the venture capital company and Mercury Asset Management.

Civil servants advising Roger Freeman, the Public Services Minister, are believed to be close to reaching a decision on the winner of the bid. Mr Freeman is expected to announce the result later this week.

However a source close to one bidder said yesterday that despite a scaling down of offers from £100m to between £50m and £70m, following a warning that HMSO's profits this year will not be as high as expected,

attempts to re-negotiate further are likely.

"Although all three are still keen on the business, there is still a lot of talking to do even after an announcement is made," the source said. "After the new profits forecast, HMSO is not as attractive as it was and there are still some things to iron out."

Another bidder said: "I think it is fair to say that the financial information coming out of HMSO is quite poor. One of the issues will be to review the figures and see whether the bid made is supported by the financial evidence."

Binder Hamlyn, investigating accountants acting for the Government, are reviewing current financial information and preparing a report to be made available to successful bidders. HMSO is the Government agency responsible for a range of publishing activities, including Hansard, passports and welfare benefits books.

Government estimates suggest it is likely to make profits of between £7 and £8m this year. This follows losses of £42m last year, £28m due to redundancy payments.

After the Government's announcement in September last year that it intended to privatise HMSO, the business was formally advertised in March with a shortlist of four organisations drawn up two months ago.

One, led by Hambros, dropped out recently.

Fear of embarrassing failures to deliver passports or benefits books, together with potential criticisms of poor service to MPs, have led civil servants overseeing the tender process to tread warily.

All bidders have given assurances that the services they provide will be of a high standard.

## CINMan purchase boosts Goldman

**JOHN WILLCOCK**

The 18-month quest for a buyer for CINMan, British Coal's £15.6bn pension fund manager, ended yesterday when US investment bank Goldman Sachs agreed to buy the company. Goldman did not name a figure, but it is understood that the price was £40m-£50m.

The deal promotes Goldman into the ranks of the world's top 25 money managers, with \$85bn under management.

Fund management companies have been at a premium, particularly in London, since investment banks realised that fund management was vital in smoothing volatile earnings from their traditional securities and corporate finance activities.

Goldman refused to say how much it had paid for CINMan. British Coal's attempts to wind down its activities since the

sale of its mining business in 1994 have been hit by crises at CINMan. First there was a well-publicised row between British Coal and the pension fund's trustees, which was followed by the withdrawal of front-runner Friends Provident.

It had offered £70m but failed to agree terms. Subsequent efforts to re-open negotiations with Dutch insurance group Robeco, second in the queue, were short-lived.

For Goldman the acquisition is an attempt to catch up with its "bulge bracket" rivals, Morgan Stanley and Merrill Lynch. Peter Sutherland, chairman and managing director of Goldman Sachs International, said: "We look forward to a long and successful relationship with the two Coal pension schemes."

Analysts said Goldman had until now concentrated on the low-margin business of short-term money market funds.

## Foreign investment lifts regions

**DIANE COYLE**  
Economics Editor

Investment by foreign firms is helping manufacturing industry in some regions escape the weak national trend.

Scotland, Wales, the East Midlands and Northern Ireland have escaped the recession affecting manufacturing since late last year. All have enjoyed above-average foreign investment, according to a report published today by consultancy Business Strategies.

"Manufacturing industry is having a poor year at the national level, with a forecast growth rate of only 0.5 per cent, but it is very noticeable that all of the regions where manufacturing output appears to be buoyant are those which have all received substantial amounts of foreign direct investment," said Neil Blake, research director.

The survey found the regions struggling most during the current industrial downturn are

the North West, Yorkshire and Humberside, suffering from excess levels of stocks and a downturn in export markets. The three all have lower-than-average foreign investment.

The one exception to the rule is the North, which has high inward investment, but has been held back by depressed metals and chemicals industries.

However, the report says regional differences are not as sharp as they once were. Dr

Blake said: "Despite big variations in regional performance of manufacturing industry, the differences in overall economic growth rates will not be as great as we would once have expected. The weakness of manufacturing industry is being masked by strengthening consumer spending, and a greater spread of service industry locations means that the benefits will be seen more widely than in the 1980s."

The consultancy shares Chancellor Kenneth Clarke's optimism about consumer spending next year. It forecasts a pick-up of 4.2 per cent following 3 per cent spending growth this year.

Services and consumer-related industries remain concentrated in London and the South-east, which means they will enjoy the fastest overall GDP growth, at 3.7 and 3.4 per cent, respectively next year.

## Devon measures quality of life

Citizens in one part of Britain are challenging the assumption that economic activity is the best guide to quality of life, writes Diane Coyle.

The West Devon Environmental Network today launches a project to measure well-being using a mixture of conventional economic statistics and environmental indicators. The group claims it is the first such

project to be run by local people for themselves. The measures used, piloted by Judith Matthews, an academic at the University of Plymouth, will range from unemployment to the incidence of asthma, water quality and damsel fly numbers.

The West Devon initiative is part of a trend that has started to filter through to more con-

ventional assessments. Two new publications compare countries on the basis of environmental and quality of life indicators.

The United Nations Human Development Report and a survey from the OECD include indicators ranging from inequality and unemployment to crime rates and greenhouse gas emissions.

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STOCK MARKETS									
FT-SE 100									
Index	Close	Week's chg	Change (%)	1995 High	1996 Low	Yield (%)	FT-SE Real-time Data		
FTSE 100	3710.50	-17.8	-0.5	3657.10	3632.30	4.08			
FTSE 250	4250.00	-66.5	-1.5	4568.60	4015.30	3.54			
FTSE 350	1860.80	-13.4	-0.7	1945.40	1816.60	3.97			
FT Small Cap	2106.65	-11.1	-0.5	2244.36	1954.06	3.13			
FT All Share	1841.45	-15.0	-0.8	1924.17	1791.95	3.90			
New York	5426.82	-83.7	-1.5	5778.00	5032.84	2.28			
Tokyo	21476.29	-180.2	-0.8	22666.80	19734.70	0.74			
Hong Kong	10845.30	+42.6	+0.4	11594.99	10204.87	3.48			
Frankfurt	2520.19	+24.1	+0.9	2583.49	2253.36	1.86			

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES									
UK interest rates									
Borrowing rates (all rates are annual %)									
Index	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	4 Year	5 Year	10 Year
UK	5.69	6.00	7.88	8.33	8.01	8.39			
US	5.28	5.97	6.75	6.54	6.95	6.97			
Japan	0.53	1.25	3.36	2.88					
Germany	3.28	3.38	6.40	6.87	6.95				
Bond Yields *									
Index	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	4 Year	5 Year	10 Year
UK	5.69	6.00	7.88	8.33	8.01	8.39			
US	5.28	5.97	6.75	6.54	6.95	6.97			
Japan	0.53	1.25	3.36	2.88					
Germany	3.28	3.38	6.40	6.87	6.95				
MAIN PRICE CHANGES									
Index	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	4 Year	5 Year	10 Year
UK	5.69	6.00	7.88	8.33	8.01	8.39			
US	5.28	5.97	6.75	6.54	6.95	6.97			
Japan	0.53	1.25	3.36	2.88					
Germany	3.28	3.38	6.40	6.87	6.95				

# CURRENCIES

\$/S

\$/DM

Pound vs.

Class	Week's Chg	Yr Ago
\$ (London)	1.5474 -0.49c	1.5645
\$ (New York)	1.5480 -0.50c	1.5665
DM (London)	2.3032 -6.03pt	2.425
¥ (London)	197.478 -14.300	156.09
¥ Index	84.7 -1.7	88.5

Dollar vs.

Class	Week's Chg	Yr Ago
£ (London)	0.6492 +0.20	0.639
£ (New York)	0.6490 +0.21	0.638
DM (London)	1.4885 -3.41pt	1.55
¥ (London)	108.235 -12.425	99.77
¥ Index	96.2 -1.4	96.1

## OTHER INDICATORS

Class	Week's chg	Year Ago	Index	Week's Yr Ago	Next Fg
Oil Brent \$	19.22 -0.78	15.70	RPI	153.0 +2.1pt	149.8 .15 Aug
Gold \$	384.35 -0.20	385.90	GDP	130.3 +1pt	125.2 .26 July
Gold £	248.38 +0.65	242.65	Base Rates	-	5.75pc \$ 75 -

Source: FT Information



GAVYN DAVIES

'From 1993 to 1996, real GDP in the US has grown by 10.2 per cent, while that in core Europe (Germany and France, which have essentially followed a common monetary policy) has grown by 4 per cent. Over that period, America has created more than 9 million jobs, while the EU has shed over 2 million'

# What the Bundesbank can learn from the Fed

Hans Tietmeyer, president of the Bundesbank, tells a story in which a computer is asked to choose the governor of the future European Central Bank. The computer has no doubt - it should be Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve in Washington. He alone, says the computer, has the required experience of running monetary policy in a large currency area, consisting of many different states, joined together in political union.

Apart from giving some insight into how the Bundesbank views the link between monetary and political integration, this story is interesting because it encapsulates a feeling becoming widespread in Europe - that we have a lot to learn from the way in which monetary policy has recently been conducted in the US. This is a novel view since, for most of the post-war period, the world has looked to the Bundesbank, not to the Federal Reserve, for guidance on how to run monetary policy.

Yet recent evidence in favour of the Fed has become compelling. From 1993 to 1996, real GDP in the US has grown by 10.2 per cent, while that in core Europe (Germany and France, which have essentially followed a common monetary policy) has grown by 4 per cent. Over that period, America has created more than 9 million jobs, while the EU has shed over 2 million. As a result of this strong economic expansion, the US has rather painlessly reduced its budget deficit from 4.4 to 1.6 per cent of GDP while in core Europe the deficit has remained stuck at 4 per cent, despite countless packages of tax rises and cuts in public services.

On the other side of the ledger is the inflation performance of the two areas. In the US, inflation has remained stuck at just under 3 per cent throughout the period, while in core Europe inflation has fallen from 3.5 per cent

in 1993 to 2 per cent now. So the European countries have enjoyed a relative improvement of around 1.5 per cent in inflation, but this has come at the expense of a cumulative loss of output over four years of over 6 per cent. Clearly, there are many in Europe who are beginning to wonder whether this was really worthwhile.

In France, for example, President Chirac complained strongly last week about the stance of monetary policy, saying that interest rates were "clearly too high". By tradition, the federal government in Germany does not openly criticise the Bundesbank, but it would be surprising if the same sentiments were not being expressed in private in Frankfurt. Essentially, Chancellor Kohl and President Chirac have started to focus on the political hell of yet again trying to cut public spending sufficiently to hit the Maastricht targets on budget deficits next year.

This has been made immeasurably more difficult by last winter's mini-recession in Continental Europe, which still appears to be dragging on. Not only are the politicians

beginning to feel that they are running up a descending escalator - with the central bankers controlling the speed of descent - but it is also beginning to dawn on them the whole EMU project is becoming associated in the political consciousness with recession and budget cutbacks. And it has also dawned, belatedly perhaps, that monetary policy offers them a route out of this impasse.

The central bankers in Continental Europe would no doubt reply that inflation was substantially above their 2 per cent objective a couple of years ago, so they had to keep monetary policy tight to retain credibility. There might be some truth in this. They would also point out that real short-term interest rates have been below their historical average since the middle of 1993, so it is hardly fair to accuse them of imposing a draconian monetary squeeze. But it is disingenuous to claim that the overall stance of monetary conditions in the EU can be summarised simply by the level of short rates. In fact, the central bankers themselves have

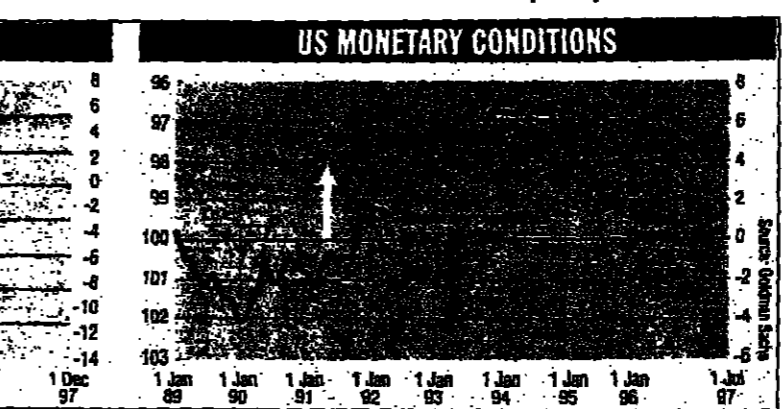
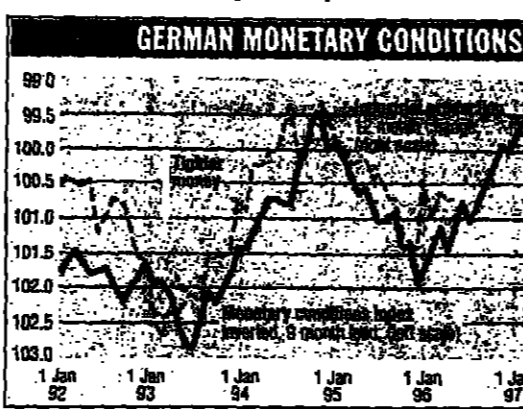
often been in the lead in pointing out that long bond yields are at least as important as short rates in determining monetary conditions, and many economists would wish to add the exchange rate into the mix as well.

Central bankers are not wholly in control of bond yields or the exchange rate. But nor are these factors totally outside their control, and their behaviour must be taken into account when setting short rates. One way of doing this is to devise a weighted index of overall monetary conditions, with the weights being determined by the impact of each of the different monetary inputs on GDP growth. John Simpson of Goldman Sachs has recently done this for all of the main industrial countries, and the results for the US and Germany are shown in the graphs. (Note that the index of monetary conditions is plotted with a lead of nine months to show what it implies for the future growth of industrial production.) It is interesting to observe the sharp contrast between the US and Germany throughout the period since 1992, and especially in 1995. Whereas

overall monetary conditions in the US have been persistently supportive of economic growth, there has only been a short period where this has been the case in Germany (or in France, for that matter). It is not difficult, in this context, to explain why a mini-recession developed in the EU last year, or indeed to explain why the slowdown in the US was nothing like as severe as it was in Europe - the difference is fully picked up by the behaviour of the monetary conditions index.

The two factors that drove European monetary conditions towards tightness in 1995 were the rise in the mark against the dollar, and the earlier increase in bond yields, which was more savage in the EU than the US. Although it is often said by policy-makers that the drop in European activity last year was hard to explain, and indicative of a deeper rooted problem of cost competitiveness, this is not supported by these data. It looks suspiciously as if there was just an old-fashioned policy mistake, with the central bankers failing to cut short rates sufficiently to offset the restrictive effects of rising bond yields and an appreciating exchange rate.

This error, if such it was, seems to have been largely eliminated, and the monetary index implies the policy stance is already expansionary enough in Europe to ensure a solid recovery in output over the balance of this year. But the central bankers cannot afford to take this for granted. The renewed rise in the mark last week, and in bond yields this year, are reminders that the authorities need to keep short rates low, or drop them further, to prevent a re-run of the unintended tightening of 1994/95. There is little doubt that, if Mr Greenspan were governor of a European central bank, he would do just that. Perhaps the Bundesbank will do the same at its meeting on Thursday.



Head of Courtaulds talks to Tom Stevenson

## Confessions of a company 'lifer'

Shortly after it was announced that Gordon Campbell was to succeed Sipko Huismans at the top of Courtaulds, he received a call from Harvard University. They were running a two-day course on how to be a chief executive - would he like to enrol? To the amusement of his colleagues - who thought two days was far too long to learn all he would need to know - Mr Campbell signed up right away.

Following in the inimitable footsteps of his larger-than-life predecessor, he was humble enough to admit he could probably do with all the tips he could pick up. The lesson he learnt was not what he expected at all, but a useful one for someone planning the future of a multinational corporation, employing 17,000 staff in 43 countries.

"What I came away with was the overwhelming realisation that my American counterparts were completely driven by the material rewards of their jobs in a way that we in Britain don't approach. We spent most of the two days talking about remuneration."

That he was surprised says a lot about Courtaulds' new chief executive, a self-confessed "lifer" with the chemicals and fibres giant and the antithesis of the flash American corporate big-shot. You do not get to be boss of a company the size of Courtaulds by just being a nice bloke, but the abiding impression given by Mr Campbell is of

a chap you wouldn't mind playing 18 holes and having a couple of pints with. His new-found American friends would think him a regular kind of guy, but might question whether he was driven enough to count as one of them.

Get him out on that golf course, however, and it would not take long to understand how the junior production manager, fresh from his Cambridge chemical engineering degree in 1968, came to rise to the top of the only company he has ever worked for while still (just) in his forties. How's his golf? "Pretty good, actually. I played off six when I was at school. I don't really play now, but last week, entertaining some Japan-

an underperforming share price. There is plenty of hard work to do if the company's undoubted technical excellence and innovation is to be converted into tangible results.

In those circumstances, it is not surprising that there are some who believe Courtaulds might have been better served by an outside appointment. "It is possible to argue it both ways but ultimately I will be judged on my performance. I don't think, however, that you should expect any dramatic change in strategy. I've been on the board since 1987 and if I didn't agree with the strategy, then we should have changed it or I should have departed," says Mr Campbell.

That strategy remains to focus on Courtaulds' three core businesses - coatings and sealants, where it leads the world in marine and yacht paints, polymer products, such as packaging and high tech polyester films, and chemicals and fibres, including Tencel, a new lightweight manmade fibre that has taken Japan and America by storm.

Tucked away in a troubled division that was cloistered last year by wildly fluctuating raw material prices and a demand roller-coaster, it is easy to forget that Tencel is a genuine success story. Based on research carried out in the UK, first commercial production in the US and the development of an initial market in Japan, the new so-called "wonder fibre" has shown that Courtaulds can still produce exciting new products and sell them around the world.

Mr Campbell admits that the biggest challenge is to increase Courtaulds' exposure to the Far East where a target of 25 per cent of group sales by the year 2000 has been set. Managing the move away from a US/Europe based business to a genuine world player, and bringing on the local management to run that global business, will be how Mr Campbell is judged.

He knows that, but also knows the limits to what one man can achieve. "What I have to do is create a style for management that allows people to make their maximum contribution. That means creating the right atmosphere and encouraging everyone I come into contact with to operate that way." If people don't agree with what we are doing they should feel confident enough to speak out.

Will it make a measurable difference? "I am certain we will turn the corner this year. I see signs of it happening but we said all along it would be September before there was a significant improvement in performance. But we do have to deliver a very sharp improvement."

He concludes: "Overall, we have to find the trick of growing the whole of the group, not just some of it, and eliminating other parts. That means everybody must perform, because there is no point holding on to businesses that don't. It looks like the golf will have to wait."



Showing his fibre: Gordon Campbell is determined to lift sales to the Far East Photograph: Sally Soames

## Why directors need to go back to school

ROGER TRAPP

Company directors have been in the news mainly over their "fat cat" salaries. But this is of far less importance than the "performing" side to their duties, according to a new book.

This does not refer to their prowess on stage. Rather, it means their ability to do the job.

One of the paradoxes of management is that while it is universally accepted that training is needed throughout the organisation below board level, few dare suggest it should apply to directors. Consequently, training courses for directors are

few and far between. In the view of Bob Garratt, author of *The Fish Rots from the Head* (HarperCollins, £18), this weakness must be remedied.

"Worryingly, under present institutional and legal structures, it is only in a crisis that directors might, much too late, become aware of what is required of them," he writes. An international consultant on director development and strategic thinking, he believes that training for their role lets them carry on doing what they were before - managing.

You might think that being a

director is a reward for being an effective manager and requires little more than supervising the person who has taken on those responsibilities. But Mr Garratt sees a distinction between the hands-on business of managing and the more intellectual activity of directing.

The latter demands a broader approach and the ability to stand back from day-to-day tasks to concentrate on such issues as policy formulation, strategic thinking, management supervision and accountability. The board's job, he writes, is to keep striking balances between internal and external pressures

on the organisation to ensure its survival. This entails giving a clear direction to the business and creating the climate in which others can align and attain themselves to that.

It is because many business people have spent their careers doing rather than thinking that they find this aspect of being a director daunting. He might add that this could also account for their susceptibility to the services of management consultants.

In the book - whose title stems from a Chinese proverb of dubious provenance - he sets out how this can be countered

through developing directors in much the same way as their subordinates have been in recent years. But all is not lost. Mr Garratt is confident that, by following certain guidelines and learning processes, individual directors and boards as a whole can reach required levels of competence.

Companies are reluctant to send directors on courses because that might suggest they consider themselves incompetent. But Mr Garratt claims that courses run by organisations like the Institute of Directors are attracting interest from some companies.

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## SCIENCE

## Things are looking up for pickled eggs

Acetic acid gives us vinegar and videos. And now it's easier to make than ever, says John Emsley

Iridium, one of the rarest metals, is set to transform a large part of the chemical industry, thanks to a group of British chemists based at Hull. They have discovered that an iridium catalyst can boost production of acetic acid by around 30 per cent. This is the acid used to make wallpaper, paint, curtains, carpets, clothes and nail varnish. It is also an essential ingredient in pickled onions, chutney, tomato ketchup and salt and vinegar crisps.

World production of acetic acid exceeds 5 million tons a year, and by the end of this decade two-thirds of it will be made using the new catalyst which was launched by BP Chemicals in June. Called

vinager, it was once used as a household cleaner.

Although cooks have been adding vinegar to foods for thousands of years, acetic acid solution is regarded as a chemical additive and consequently has been assigned an E-number (E260). There is no difference between the two forms of the acid, which is why the BP variety finds its way into pickles, chutneys, cheeses, salad cream, brown sauces, mint jelly, and horseradish cream.

An early method of making acetic acid was to heat wood chippings. The liquid distilled was mainly a solution of acetic acid. Today, most companies make it from methanol, made from the mixture of carbon monoxide and hydrogen gas produced by reacting natural gas with steam. When methanol is mixed with more carbon monoxide it forms acetic acid - given the right catalyst.

Chemists at Monsanto, the US chemical company, discovered the first such catalyst, based on rhodium iodide, which BP has used until now. The new catalyst is the work of Mark Howard, John Cook and Derrick Watson, who found that iridium acetate worked even better. Both rhodium and iridium belong to the so-called platinum group of metals, all of which are rare. Rhodium is five times rarer than gold, but iridium is 300 times rarer, yet much cheaper.

But iridium acetate alone is not enough. "We have devised a new system that depends on promoter molecules to activate the iridium catalyst to work efficiently, and with them we get a quicker reaction with fewer side products," claims John Atkinson, BP's process technology manager. For the time being, the company is keeping these promoter molecules secret.

The largest single use of industrial acetic acid is to make vinyl acetate monomer, used in paints, adhesives, textile treatments and paper coatings. Another major use is making polyester which is turned into fibres, polyethylene bottles, audio and video tapes. Acetic acid is also needed for viscose and rayon yarns, for printing inks and for over-the-counter medicines such as aspirin and ibuprofen. Other products include vitamins A and C, washing powders, jeans, leather goods, photographic film and filter tips.

Dr John Emsley is science writer in residence at Imperial College, London.

## Molecule of the Month

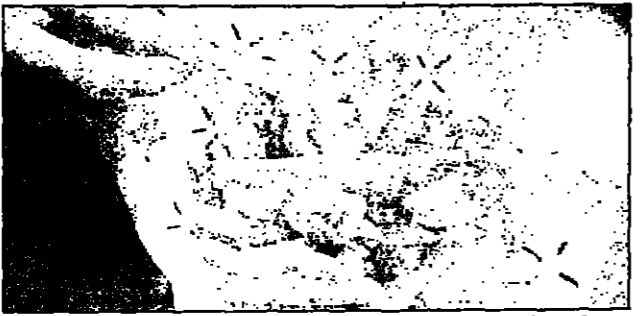


Cativa, it is already in operation at the company's Texas City plant, where output has increased by 80,000 tonnes a year. There are also plans to introduce the new technology at BP's other plants around the world, including Humberside, where it was discovered.

Acetic acid, also known as ethanoic acid, is a small molecule that humans have been manufacturing for thousands of years, from the time we began making fermented drinks. When the bacterium *Acetobacter* gets into these drinks, it turns the alcohol into acetic acid, making it sour (hence the vinegar, from *vin* = Old French for sour wine) and undrinkable, but not unusable.

Food pickled in vinegar can be preserved for months, and so alcoholic liquors were deliberately converted to wine, cider and malt vinegars. Acetic acid acts as a preservative partly due to its acidity, but mainly because it inhibits spoilage organisms, particularly yeasts and bacteria, in solutions as weak as 0.1 per cent. Acetic acid is used in bread-making to prevent the spores of *Bacillus mesentericus* from germinating, causing the bread to go rropy.

Pure acetic acid is a colourless liquid that boils at 118°C, but is not as corrosive as other pure acids. So has been used to remove warts. Normally, we would only encounter acetic acid as a 5 per cent solution in water, the same strength as vinegar, like



The sauce of it: acetic acid makes ketchup - and aspirin



At five, children learn to think more deviously, understanding so-called 'false beliefs'. Brain activity sparked by this process shows as yellow in PET scans, right

Brian Harris

## Mindreader? Yes, you are

Guessing other people's thoughts is an essential human skill. And now we know which part of the brain gives us this 'theory of mind'. Sanjida O'Connell reports

Every time we venture out on the road, we stake our lives on our ability to read minds, a skill we take for granted. Having a "theory of mind", is nothing to do with telepathy but refers to our ability to understand that other people have thoughts, beliefs and desires. Whether driving or waiting to walk across a road, we rely on our general expectations about the normal desires and decisions of other motorists.

Daniel Dennett, a philosopher from Tufts University, Boston, gives another example of how we continuously and unconsciously use theory of mind: "... watching a film with a highly original and unsterilized plot, we see the hero smile at the villain and we all smile and effortlessly arrive at the same diagnosis: 'Aha! we conclude (but perhaps not consciously). He wants her to think he doesn't know she intends to defraud her brother!'"

Every normal person over the age of five can demonstrate a theory of mind. And although it was only discovered just over a decade ago, there is now scientific evidence indicating exactly which part of the brain computes what other people are thinking. The litmus test of having a theory of mind is whether you can understand that someone else believes something to be true when it is, in fact, false. Dr Heinz Wimmer and Dr Josef Perner, from the University of Salzburg in Austria, were the first psychologists to prove that children under the age of four to five cannot understand these so-called "false beliefs".

They devised a task known as the Sally-Anne test. Children were told a story about two dolls, Sally and Anne. Sally has a basket and Anne has a box. Sally places her marble in her basket and goes out. While she is out, naughty Anne moves Sally's marble from the basket

to her box, then she leaves the room. Sally comes back in.

The children were asked where Sally would look for her marble. Adults know that Sally will look for it in her basket. She has a false belief about the marble's location. Children younger than four or five (the exact age varies) give the wrong answer: they point to the box, where the marble really is.

This understanding of false beliefs opens the gates to a full comprehension of other people. It is a skill understood the world over. It can be demonstrated among preliterate people living an ancient hunter-gatherer lifestyle, such as the Baka pygmies of the rainforests of south-eastern Cameroon. Dr Jeremy Avey and Dr Paul Harris from Oxford University have demonstrated that an ability to write is not necessary to an understanding of beliefs and desires, by performing a version of the Sally-Anne test involving mangoes in cooking pots. Again, only children over the age of five could get these questions right. "The fact that belief-desire reasoning emerges at approximately the same age in such diverse settings strengthens the claim that this mode of reasoning is a universal feature of normal human development," says Dr Avey.

Although the ability to understand a false belief happens relatively suddenly for a child, there is a definite developmental progression leading up to it. It starts with one-year-old infants, who begin to follow the direction of another person's gaze when they look at objects. About six months later, they look where someone is pointing, rather than at their finger. This is the first step

towards understanding that what their parents are looking at is what they are mentally paying attention to.

Later, children develop a growing awareness that seeing leads to knowing - in other words, if you are looking in a cupboard, you know far more about its contents than someone who is standing next to it but not looking inside. Between three and four, children start to understand that other people have desires and wishes, until finally they comprehend false beliefs.

The exact age at which a child can perform a theory-of-mind task is determined by how many siblings there are in the family, and how extensive the child's vocabulary is: the larger the family and the more words a child knows, the earlier the age

at which they can pass the test.

Until two recent studies no one could say which area of the brain was used in this process. In one experiment, a team led by Dr Paul Fletcher and Professor Chris Frith of the Wellcome Department of Cognitive Neurology in London gave brain scans to volunteers who were listening to stories that either required a physical understanding, for example, that if you knock a person, they may fall; and ones that needed a mental understanding, such as the Sally-Anne task. They used the PET scan, in which a subject is given a dose of radioactive oxygen in water. When a particular part of the brain is especially active, it uses more oxygen. The radioactivity shows up in the

scan, which can be coloured to show levels of activity. Both types of stories showed increased brain activity in the temporal lobes, the superior temporal lobe and the posterior cingulate cortex. But only the theory of mind tasks activated an area at the front of the brain known as Brodmann's 8, on the frontal lobe.

The other study, conducted slightly earlier than Fletcher and Frith's, also involved giving PET scans to students while they listened to a theory-of-mind task. Dr Vinod Goel, Dr Jordan Grafman and colleagues at Bethesda, in the US, asked students how Christopher Columbus might have categorised the function of artefacts he discovered on his travels; they had to assume

what kind of knowledge a European in the 15th century might have - a rather bizarre version of the Sally-Anne task. All the subjects also used the same part of the frontal lobe.

Brodmann's 8 has widespread connections to the rest of the brain. Professor Frith believes that the part of the brain associated with theory of mind may be needed to integrate information and stimuli drawn from other parts of the brain.

The work is highly important, not only in furthering our own understanding of the mind, but for people with autism. Sufferers of the disorder do not have a theory of mind, so are unable to deal with people socially or communicate effectively. Finding out whether the area of the brain is damaged in people with autism could help us to understand and treat autism, which at present is an incurable disorder.

Sanjida O'Connell's first novel, 'Theory of Mind', is published this month by Black Swan, £6.99.

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- Point of order (6)
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- Third rate poet is passable (5)
- Wood's non-starter for structural support (4)
- Nick copper item of spurious value (10)
- Elderly lady is after Henry's love (4,4)
- I negotiate with model (5)
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- Revolutionary quarter? (5,5)
- Is said to be staff writer (4)
- Celebrate when no longer on endless duty (5)

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- Aiming to reproduce oriental picture (7)
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